

# Fire This Time!

## INDIGENOUS YOUTH



## ¡VIVA CUBA! ¡VIVA PRIDE!



## BUILDING A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT



## STOP BILL C-51 & BILL C-59!

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## CUBAN MEDICAL TEAM AIDS GUATEMALA



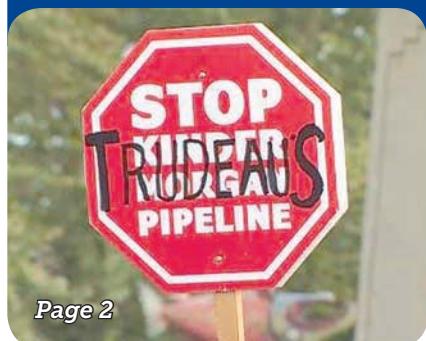
## INTERVIEW WITH PUERTO RICAN ACTIVISTS



## VENEZUELA



## STOP THE PIPELINE



## OPEN THE BORDERS!



# 7 IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT THE TRUDEAU PIPELINE BAILOUT

By Thomas Davies

If you're wondering how surreal environmental politics have been in Canada over the past year, here's "Exhibit A": this Halloween, Environment Minister Catherine McKenna came to Parliament Hill dressed up as a "Climate Crusader" - while at the same time overseeing a Ministry which, according to its audits, won't even come close to its United Nations climate commitments. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also somehow found it unironic to dress up as Superman after his campaign slogan "Real Change Now" has become more like "Real Disappointment Now" - especially when it comes to Indigenous rights and climate action.

However, Superman and the Climate Crusader took it to a whole other universe this May when they decided to become Oil Company Executives and committed billions of taxpayer dollars to buy the existing Trans Mountain pipeline and its and controversial expansion project from Kinder Morgan.

It was a move that even the most skeptical observer probably didn't expect, and while protests were immediate and continued, there has been some necessary recalibration and fact-finding as to how this government bailout effects the project and the campaign to stop it. Truth be told, what we are finding out is even worse than we thought possible. It's hard to summarize the absurdity, but here are 7 Important Facts About the Trudeau Pipeline Bailout:

## 1 -- It's More Like a \$15-20 Billion Commitment Than \$4.5 Billion

We reported this last issue, but it's worth repeating. Well-known economist and specialist on the Trans Mountain pipeline Robyn Allan found that "By the time the expansion is built, the price tag for nationalizing the existing assets and building the expansion will cost Canadians upwards of \$15 - \$20 billion.

That's because the \$7.4 billion capital cost for the project estimated in February 2017 will likely exceed \$9 billion by the time an up to date budget is prepared. Then there is \$2.1 billion in financial assurances required for the land-based spill risk and \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan for marine spill risk that Ottawa has already agreed to."

## 2 -- The Alberta Government Admitted in Its Budget that the Pipeline Won't Create New Revenue

Another Robyn Allan investigation found that despite claims from the Alberta government that the pipeline expansion would add \$15 billion a year in government revenue, their Budget explains it would provide no economic benefit because any potential pricing gain from increased pipeline capacity will be offset by major heavy oil pricing problems.

In 2016, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) announced new regulations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It ruled that after January 1, 2020, marine vessels will be required to burn fuels with a sulphur content of no more than 0.5 percent, reducing the current sulphur content cap by 3 percent.

Alberta's Budget clearly states that 'the light-heavy differential is forecast to remain wide as new rules on the sulphur content of marine fuels from the International Maritime Organization go into effect. This is expected to reduce demand for bunker fuel, which mainly comes from heavy oil, and reduce heavy oil prices.'

Alberta's Budget identifies that the price impact of IMO 2020 will be about \$8 US per barrel. What this means is that instead of the promised narrowing of differentials from Trans Mountain's expansion, Alberta expects none."

## 3 -- This is Going to Cost Taxpayers Big Time

A new study released by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA) said buying the Kinder Morgan Canada assets, plus planning and construction costs will put \$6.5 billion in unplanned spending on the books for the 2018-19 fiscal year. This will add 36% to the already projected \$18.1 billion deficit. Some of the report's key points:

"There is every indication that the Canadian government has bought the pipeline at a high price and is likely to resell it for far less than it will pay to build it."

"The Canadian government is taking open-ended responsibility to absorb all costs and ensure profits for any potential



new owner of the pipeline. As a result, long-term cost increases for taxpayers are effectively uncapped, posing a significant, unquantifiable liability."

## 4 -- Kinder Morgan is Making Out with a 637% Profit

The same report also found that: "IEEFA estimates that the outlay that can be attributed to Kinder Morgan Inc. for the project is approximately \$610 million. Between them, Kinder Morgan Inc. and Kinder Morgan Canada will receive \$3.89 billion in profit. This amounts to a return on an outlay of 637%."

Two Kinder Morgan Canada Executives, Ian Anderson and David Safari, will also earn \$1.5 million each in bonuses from the sale.

## 5 -- They Call Us 'Fanatics' While Issuing Death Threats

David Dodge, former Bank of Canada governor and high-profile advisor to Alberta's NDP government, recently made this threatening prediction at a public talk in Edmonton, "There are some people that are going to die in protesting construction of this pipeline. We have to understand that. Nevertheless, we have to be willing to enforce the law."

He then went on to say, "It's going to take some fortitude to stand up [to them]," while referring to those who oppose the pipeline as "fanatics" who have "the equivalent of religious zeal."

So who are the "fanatics" and why didn't Trudeau or Notley publicly condemn these not so subtle threats?

## 6 -- There are Still Many Potential Hurdles Before Construction

A recent press release by the West Coast Environmental Law points out, "the federal government, as the owner of the pipeline, must honour its commitment to the NEB process, including the 157 conditions, to ensure the project's safety. These

# NO TRUDEAU PIPELINE BAILOUT!

## United We Will Win Climate Convergence Builds United Front Against Pipelines

By Thomas Davies

If Justin Trudeau thought that by bailing out Kinder Morgan and the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project he would curb the organizing effort against the pipeline, the month of June proved him to be sorely mistaken. Many groups, including Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver, redoubled their efforts with the added danger of possibly being forced by the government to pay billions for the unnecessary and dangerous pipeline project.

**June 2** saw Climate Convergence organizers participate in two simultaneous rallies — one in Whistler and another on Burnaby Mountain. Finance Minister Bill Morneau was expected to give a press conference after a G-7 Finance Ministers meeting in Whistler and local residents mobilized a noise demonstration at the same time. Morneau rescheduled his press conference to be an hour earlier to avoid the demonstration, but organizers set up outside of his expensive hotel regardless and received a lot of media attention.

At the same time, another Protect the Inlet rally was occurring at the gates of Kinder Morgan's tank farm facility on Burnaby Mountain — challenging an expanded court injunction meant to intimidate further organizing.

**June 4** was a National Day of Action called by Leadnow in front of Members of Parliament's offices across Canada. Climate Convergence organizers helped take the lead to set up a loud demonstration in front of Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan's constituency office. People of all ages and backgrounds chanted, "Money for Education, Not for Bailouts! Money for Housing, Not for Bailouts!" More than 100 other actions also happened on only a few days notice.

Climate Convergence also hosted an Art Build on **June 20** to begin painting new banners and making new signs for upcoming actions. Finally, on **June 30** Climate Convergence participated in another Protect the Inlet rally in front of the Kinder Morgan tank farm gates. This demonstration involved multiple arrests when two waves of people blocked the gates as police moved in. Despite the rain, the mood was defiant, and it is clear that if Prime Minister Trudeau wants to build the pipeline, he will face continued resistance.

Climate Convergence is organizing its own Day of Action on July 4, with an Intersection Rally and Community Discussion happening the same evening. The coalition will also continue to prioritize participating and reinforcing all possible actions to stop the Trudeau Pipeline Bailout. For more information visit: [www.climateconvergence.ca](http://www.climateconvergence.ca)

Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter: @Climate604

## Battle of Ideas Press

### Upcoming Book Release

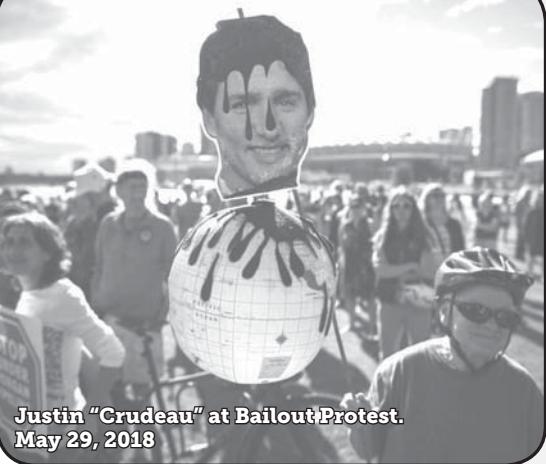
### SYSTEM CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE

By Thomas Davies

Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the *Fire This Time* Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver.



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Justin "Crudeau" at Bailout Protest.  
May 29, 2018

conditions include obtaining more than 1,000 permits required for the construction and approving a safe, final route through multiple route hearings. There are also around 40 pre-construction conditions still under review, including a dozen that applies to the Burnaby terminal, which is slated for construction in a week."

It continues, "The NEB conditions are weak, ignoring concerns made by First Nations and science on bitumen spills. However, at a minimum, whoever owns the pipeline must at least honour what is there."

There are also currently 14 legal challenges before the Federal Court of Appeals.

### 7 -- We are the Most Important Factor

While permit applications and legal challenges have been able to slow projects down, it's rare they stop them. With literally billions of dollars at stake, there's always a loophole found or a convenient excuse for why the rules were changed at the last minute. The reason the project is so far behind schedule and the government is resorting to such desperate measures is ongoing mass public opposition. Without it, the pipeline would already be built. This has been a successful formula so far, but we need to go even further to get the project cancelled. This means continuing to mobilize the hundreds of thousands already opposed, and appealing to the many more who are disgusted by this huge waste of taxpayer money and confused about the alternatives. We have a real opportunity here — let's make the most of it!

No Trudeau Pipeline Bailout!

People and Planet Before Pipelines and Profits!

Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59

By Alison Bodine

Because of U.S. president Donald Trump administration's "zero tolerance" immigration policy, at least 2,342 children, including infants and babies, known as "tender-age" children, were separated from their parents in the one-month between May 5 and June 9. The videos, photos and recordings of families being separated, and children and infants being detained in cages by U.S. border officials are gut-wrenching and heartbreaking.

Furthermore, the government of the U.S. does not have a plan for how the children taken will be returned to their parents. As soon as the children were separated, they became "unaccompanied children," the same classification they would have received if they had crossed alone. This makes them eligible to be sent to one of an estimated 100 Department of Health and Human Services shelters in 17 states.

As reported by Migration Policy Institute, "As of yet, the administration has articulated no plan to reunite these parents and children. Doing so would require a massive logistical system...with reports of some mothers deported back to Central America as their children were left in the United States, and of detained parents not

Inc. will be paid \$458million this year alone for detaining children in their facilities (Time Magazine).

As well, family separation is set to continue through escalating deportations being carried out by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). This agency, which was founded in 2001, is responsible for terrorizing immigrant and refugee communities in the United States, and their campaign of fear has only increased since Trump took office. As David Leopold, the former president

him the name "Deporter In Chief" in the immigrant's rights movement. In the eight years before Obama, over 2 million people were deported by President George W. Bush. Millions of families were separated by these criminal policies.

Then there is the Presidency of Bill Clinton, who also implemented policies that criminalized people fleeing for their lives. During the 1994 Clinton Presidency, there was a policy called "prevention through deterrence" - which sounds an awful lot like

the "deterrence" that President Trump is referring to today. This policy forced immigrants to cross through the border under much more deadly conditions in deserts or mountains where they died from dehydration, heat stroke, exhaustion and hypothermia.

To make it acceptable to people in the United States to treat migrants this way, Trump has also increased the campaign to dehumanize people crossing the border, capitalizing on people's fears and the economic insecurities caused by deepening capitalist crisis in the U.S. Racist Trump has referred to immigrants as "animals", "murderers", and "rapists", and has even used the word "infest" to describe

## REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT CRISIS A RESULT OF CAPITALISM'S INHUMANE POLICIES



# OPEN THE BORDERS NOW!

knowing where their child is and vice versa."

This is U.S. immigration policy in its rawest form - traumatizing children to terrorize migrants coming to the United States fleeing war, violence and economic and environmental destruction. The cruelty and inhumanity that is U.S. immigration policy did not begin in 2018. The criminalization and dehumanization of immigrants, migrants and refugees are fundamental to the immigration policy of the U.S. government.

### From Family Separation to Indefinite Family Detention

The U.S. government, both under President Obama and President Trump, also pays private companies and non-profit organizations a shocking amount of money to detain children and immigrants - and appears to have no intention to break these lucrative contracts. One non-profit, Southwest Key Programs,

of the American Immigration Lawyers Association told Bloomberg News "I've never seen anything like it in my 30-plus years of practice...Trump has created a police state for immigrants - legal and unauthorized."

### Detaining Immigrants and Refugees is Business as Usual

This policy of the U.S. Trump administration is shocking in its blatant abuse of children and families, but it is not the first time that the U.S. government, headed by either a Democrat or a Republican, has been exposed for their criminal treatment of immigrants, migrants and refugees. Under President Obama, a quota was established for the Department of Homeland Security which bound them to have a minimum 34,000 people detained and "in bed" at the detentions centres at any given time. Between 2009 and 2015, President Obama deported 2.5million people - earning

immigrants crossing the border looking for somewhere safe to be.

### Who Is Responsible for the Crisis?

As reported by Robert Warren, from the Center for Migration Studies, "The number [of people] attempting to get across the Southern border is probably the lowest it's been since at least the 1970s."

What this means is that unlike the U.S. government wants people to believe, the so-called border crisis today is not due to increased migration to the United States. The U.S. border is not unprepared or overwhelmed; its brutality has been deliberately organized. The human crisis at the border is in fact, not due at all to anything that the migrants and refugees themselves have done. The responsibility for the crisis lies squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. capitalist government.

People crossing the border didn't decide to



**8-year-old Akemi Vargas cries as she talks about being separated from her father at a protest in Phoenix. June 18, 2018**

implement a “zero-tolerance” policy, nor to be separated from their children, nor to be imprisoned for months waiting to have their asylum claims heard. No, people crossing the border aren’t even responsible for the conditions that drove them to make the deadly journey through Latin America in the first place.

The U.S. government and their allies have decimated economies, imposed neoliberal policies, destroyed entire countries, wrecked environments and torn apart the basic social fabric that holds entire societies together across the third-world (colonial and semi-colonial countries).

Migrants and refugees are fleeing countries that have been destroyed by imperialist war, occupations and theft of resources. All migrants and refugees unconditionally have the right and deserve a chance to build a life within the countries that are responsible for the destruction of their homelands.

As reported by the Doctors Without Borders, in a May 2017 report on conditions in Central America’s Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala), “Through violence assessment surveys and medical and psychosocial consultations, MSF [Doctors Without Borders] teams have witnessed and documented a pattern of violent displacement, persecution, sexual violence, and forced repatriation akin to the conditions found in the deadliest armed conflicts in the world today.” These are the conditions that the U.S. government has imposed upon millions of people in Latin America.

#### **The Government of Canada Detains Children Too!**

The government of Canada is no exception when it comes to the criminal treatment of immigrants and refugees, including migrant children. The StarMetro Vancouver compiled data from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) and found that on average, 182 children are held in immigration detention in Canada a year. The damaging impacts of detention on children know no borders, and children in detention in Canada experience

the same terror and long-term psychological effects as those in the United States.

When it comes to an understanding of the inhumanity of Canada’s refugee policy, it is important to examine Prime Minister Trudeau’s policy of accepting Syrian refugees in Canada. During the 2015 election campaign, Trudeau made the promise that the government of Canada would sponsor “25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of 2015.” This promise was made at a time when thousands of refugees were drowning in the Mediterranean Sea fleeing imperialist wars and occupations in the Middle East and North Africa. The government of Canada failed to meet this target, while at the same time they also utterly failed at welcoming the refugees as they also promised. Syrian refugees reported trouble with accessing food banks, sub-standard housing and 16-month long wait-lists for federally funded English classes.

Last year, when U.S. President Trump first instated the outrageous Muslim Ban Liberal Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau was boasting #WelcometoCanada on Twitter. Hypocritically at the same time as this tweet, the government of Canada was decreasing the number of government-assisted refugees it would accept in 2017. As reported by the Canadian Council for Refugees only 7,500 non-Syrian refugees were resettled in Canada at a time when the United Nations Human Rights Commission has called for the urgently needed resettlement of over one-million people. The government of Canada has the moral obligation and responsibility to accept more refugees, from Syria and every other country that Canada has worked to destroy alongside other imperialist governments.

Another gross example of the criminality of the government of Canada’s immigration policy is the “Safe Third Country Agreement” currently in place between the governments of the U.S. and Canada. According to this agreement, a person making a refugee claim must do so in the first country that they arrive in – whether that be the United States or Canada. Therefore, if a refugee enters through the U.S./

**Children detained inside a Central Processing Center in McAllen, Texas. May 23 2018**



Mexico border, but then travels to Canada before making their claim for asylum, they will be returned to the United States and told to make their claim there. The Safe Third Country Agreement is the treaty that forced refugees and migrants to cross into Canada in the middle of winter, risking their lives and losing limbs, fingers and toes. They have the very real fear that if they cross at an official border crossing and make their claim for asylum, they will be turned back to the United States.

*We encourage people to sign an online petition sponsored by the New Democratic Party (NDP) MP Jenny Kwan, demanding that Canada cancel the Safe Third Country Agreement with the U.S.*

Ending the Safe Third Country Agreement is especially important now that the U.S. Attorney General Jeff Session has announced that asylum will no longer be given to those migrants fleeing domestic and gang violence.

#### **This Crisis Facing Humanity is Worldwide**

The reasons that there is an “immigration crisis” in the U.S. are the same reasons why there is a “refugee crisis” in Europe. An unprecedented number of people around the world are fleeing countries that have become unlivable due to wars, occupations and economic devastation wrought on them by the U.S. government and their allies.

Today there are 68.5million people that have been forcibly displaced around the world. According to the UN Refugee Commission, this is the highest number ever recorded. Over 50% of refugees worldwide (25.4million people as recognized by the United Nations Refugee Agency) come from five countries: Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar and Somalia.

Migrants fleeing the Middle East and North Africa continue to risk their lives crossing the deadly Mediterranean Sea. In 2017, 186,768 refugees arrived in Europe; at least 3,116 were killed on their journey. 200 people were drowned off the shore of Libya in just three days at the end of June 2018. Tens of thousands of people are subject to human trafficking and

Protest in San Francisco against the separation of immigrant and refugee families, June 30, 2018



slavery. As of April 2018, over 56,000 people are left living in limbo in Greece.

In nearly two years, from October 2015 to December 2017 a shameful 33,154 refugees were relocated by the European Union as hundreds of thousands of people continued their dangerous journey through Europe until they found a country where they could claim asylum or settled in the large slum camps. And this is Europe's "solution" to the refugee crisis?

Although government representatives in the European Union and Australia, like those in the U.S., claim that they are facing an unprecedented crisis when it comes to immigrants, migrants and refugees, third-world countries continue to bear the brunt of the crisis. 80-90% of refugees fleeing their home countries remain in a country that is neighbouring their own according to the United Nations. For example, one in four people in Lebanon is a refugee, and Turkey is currently home to 3.4million refugees from Syria.

If colonial or semi-colonial countries like Lebanon and Turkey can accept millions of refugees, then the countries like the United States and Canada have no excuses.

After 17 years of the new era of war and

occupation since September 2001, imperialist wars, occupations, sanctions and all forms of foreign intervention in the Middle East and Africa have brought on the crisis. The imperialist legacy of the dirty wars in Latin America has forced tens of thousand of people to look for a life in the United States. People have been left with no other option than to abandon everything that they have ever known for the possibility of a better future and some sense of security, in another city, country or continent.

#### **Family Separation is Not New**

Over the last month, the mainstream media in both the U.S. and Canada is reporting on the separation of families and the inhuman treatment of migrants as if the news is a shocking of somehow not representative of "Canadian" or "US" values. However, this is far from the case.

The governments of the U.S. and Canada are well experienced in family separations, starting with the genocide of millions of indigenous people. Then there are the millions of African children that were ripped from their families and homes as part of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the continued forceful separation of black families within the system of slavery, where children were ripped from their mother's arms to be sold.

In Canada, as in the U.S., the use of terror to control Indigenous people and destroy their culture continues to this day. From Residential schools which forced 150,000 children from their

**Refugee family being apprehended by U.S. border patrol near McAllen, Texas. May 9, 2018**



#### **Veterans Condemn Trump's 'Zero Tolerance' Immigration Policy**

Veterans For Peace strongly condemns Trump's 'zero tolerance' immigration policy, the imprisonment of children, and criminalization of undocumented immigrants. Our immigration laws and enforcement tactics have long been at a crisis point and we are now witnessing even more draconian enforcement and criminalization of people seeking refuge.

Veterans For Peace recognizes that these orders did not happen in a vacuum, but represent a long history of racist and violent policy that has perpetuated U.S. wars across the world and horrific domestic policy that created ICE, massive immigration detention centers and a wall that already splits towns and separates friends and families. However, the Trump administration has escalated, at an alarming pace, the implementation of new dangerous measures. President Trump is moving to fulfill on the promises of his campaign that caused an upsurge of hateful sentiment in our nation and spurred a rise in fear and anger.

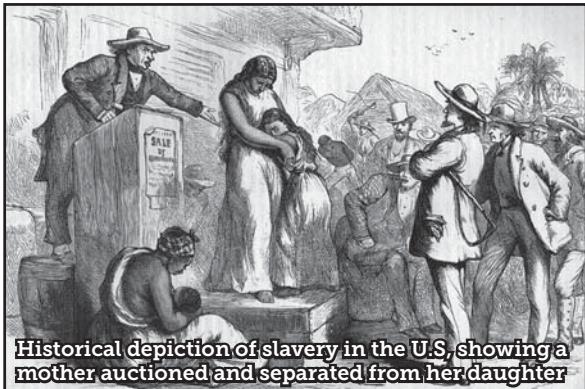
Veterans For Peace understands that this outrageous abuse of refugee children and their parents is an extension of historic and current U.S. intervention in Central America. The U.S. government conducts military interventions, orchestrates coup d'états, and supports oligarchs and dictators. The CIA, NED and USAID pursues regime change for any Latin American government that will not bow to U.S. economic exploitation of their land and their people. This too must end. It is time for the U.S. to have a just foreign policy that treats our neighbors with fairness and compassion.

At a time when refugees who are fleeing U.S.-sponsored violence are being branded as criminals, rapists and terrorists, and as anti-immigrant rhetoric continues to poison the public discourse, it is important for people of conscience to take a stand and to offer a different narrative.

Instead of welcoming refugees as required under international humanitarian standards, the U.S. government is treating individuals and families fleeing to the U.S. as if they are criminals, imprisoning them for profit. Moreover, the U.S. "solution" to the so-called child migrant crisis has been to further militarize the borders of Mexico and Central America and to jail families indefinitely.

We need to build grassroots power to challenge the racist status quo and we need to take action. We applaud those who have already taken action across the country, from Portland to D.C. We can not remain silent about the connections between militarized U.S. foreign policy and the reasons why people flee here for their lives.

*From: veteransforpeace.org*



**Historical depiction of slavery in the U.S. showing a mother auctioned and separated from her daughter**

families through to today, where 52 percent of children in foster care are Indigenous, although they are only 8% of the Canadian population.

These are only a few examples, and it is easy to see the legacy of family separation and abuse of children that runs through the very foundations of the U.S. and Canada.

### Open the Borders Now!

Think about it, in 2017 every two seconds one person around the world had to flee their home in search of somewhere safe to try and build a new life. Such a vast exodus on humanity cannot be contained by walls, or checkpoints, or razor-wire fences and armed guards. The only solution to the crisis of immigrants, migrants and refugees facing the world today is to open the borders and demand imperialists hands off colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Imperialist governments around the world are attempting to use racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia to divide poor, working and oppressed people from immigrants, refugees and migrants. If immigrants are living in fear of a “zero tolerance” policy and family separation or detention, they will be less likely to fight for their human rights.

More than that, keeping poor, working and oppressed people, including immigrants, divided gives imperialist governments the space that they require to implement the government cut-backs and austerity measures necessary to stave off an economic crisis. This is more easily realized when people are divided, a task that can be accomplished through Xenophobia and Islamophobia.

This same economic crisis also requires imperialist countries around the world to maintain and expand wars and occupations in the Middle East and Africa, to reach more and more markets. For people living in the Middle East and Africa, this means getting used to living under the new era of war and occupation, a period of perpetual war. Imperialist wars and occupations, combined with the ever-increasing climate crisis, will continue to create millions of migrants willing to risk everything for somewhere to be safe.

This crisis will not be solved by legalities, because the criminality lies in the actions of imperialist governments themselves. Opening the borders is a short-term solution to the humanitarian crisis facing migrants today. The only long-term solution is to end all imperialist world domination, as well as wars and occupations.

As a start, Canada should immediately accept 200,000 refugees, and grant them immediate human and legal rights. It is the government of Canada's obligation to do so.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

### SIGN THE PETITION!

Demanding Canada cancel the Safe Third Country Agreement with the U.S.

<https://petitions.ourcommons.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-1755>

## PEOPLE OF THE U.S. AND CANADA *Fightback Against Criminal Immigration Policies!*

By Alison Bodine

*A distraught but determined 6-year-old Salvadoran girl repeatedly pleads for someone to call her aunt. Just one call, she begs anyone who will listen. She says she's memorized the phone number, and at one point, rattles it off to a consular representative. 'My mommy says that I'll go with my aunt,' she whimpers, 'and that she'll come to pick me up there as quickly as possible.' □ Recording from inside a child detention centre in McAllen, Texas released to ProPublica.org.*

This recording is one of the many devastating examples of the criminal treatment of children at the hands of the U.S. government that brought hundreds of thousands of people to the streets on Saturday, June 30. On this day, actions were held in over 780 cities in the United States, Canada and around the world demanding an end to the Trump administration's inhuman immigration policies of separating and detaining families.

March On - Vancouver organized a rally at the U.S. Consulate in Downtown Vancouver. The powerful action brought together people from all walks of life, including many families and children with brightly coloured signs. Importantly, the rally program also included a focus on the government of Canada's immigration policies that also detain children, and tear families apart, including words from refugees trying to build a life here in Vancouver. Speakers also addressed the government of Canada's criminal treatment of Indigenous children and families, including forced separations.

Following the speakers, there was a short and energetic march to the Trump Tower. There, more speakers shared their condemnation of the government's the U.S. and Canada's inhuman treatment of migrants and refugees, and people were encouraged to sign an online petition sponsored by the New Democratic Party (NDP) MP Jenny Kwan demanding that Canada cancel the Safe Third Country Agreement with the U.S. This treaty forces migrants to make their claim for asylum in the U.S., if they arrive there prior to coming to Canada.

Leading up to and since June 30, there have also been continued protests in many U.S. cities in front of the offices of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency responsible for tearing families apart through deportation.

As peace-loving people in Canada and around the world, we have the responsibility to demand that the government of Canada and the U.S. open the borders immediately to all migrants and refugees fleeing wars, occupations and economic devastation. It is the governments of the U.S. and Canada themselves that have imposed on the world such a terrible inequality and imbalance that 68.5 million people were forcibly displaced in 2017. Let us join together in solidarity with people in the U.S. out on the streets fighting for an end to the criminal immigration policies of the U.S. government!



MP Jenny Kwan demands Canada cancel the Safe Third Country Agreement



# Revolutionary Cuban Youth: An Example to the World!

*A Statement by*  
*the Young Communist League of Cuba (UJC)*

## Introduction by Tamara Hansen

*U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, addressed the assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) on June 4, 2018. Within his remarks he boldly attacked the governments of Nicaragua, Venezuela and Cuba. He spoke specifically about youth in Cuba, asserting that they have no hopes or dreams for a better future within the revolution. He expressed, "in Cuba today, we see an expectation that change is inevitable and that it can't come quickly enough. Young Cubans born under a dictatorship are uninterested in hollow revolutionary slogans. They demand educational opportunities free from political constraints or a totalitarian regime's repression. They want what youth everywhere else wants: opportunities to use their talents, to exercise their voice, achieve their potential, and build a bright future for themselves. As democratic societies, we must support young people in Cuba and elsewhere in the hemisphere in their hopes for democratic change."*

*The day after Mr. Pompeo dared to make these remarks on the international stage, the youth of Cuba responded. Below is the full statement made by the Unión de Jóvenes Comunistas (Young Communist League of Cuba) in response to Pompeo's claims.*

## **Statement by Cuban youth in response to the disrespectful and absurd words of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo at the OAS General Assembly**

History repeats itself. Arrogance, ignorance of Cuban reality and contempt for the peoples of Our America, lead once again to unacceptable, lying and manipulative statements in the mouth, this time by the U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, during the OAS General Assembly, which was well defined by Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa Garcia as the "United States Ministry of Colonies".



They are wrong again and this character makes a fool of himself when he talks about the lack of opportunities for Cuban youth and questions our rights and options for building the future. This is a gross provocation because, even for someone like him, it would be impossible to ignore the revolutionary conquests that have allowed our children, adolescents and young people to grow and develop showing impressive and irrefutable human development indices, within a society that listens, protects and empowers them.

He speaks of supporting young people and he does so on behalf of the government that is applying a criminal blockade that is widely rejected and condemned by the entire world. It's the blockade which is responsible for limitations and shortcomings that have a direct impact on the very young people he is now hypocritically trying to defend. He offends with the double standards of those who have given support and

refuge to those responsible for terrorist acts that have caused the death and physical incapacity of hundreds of young people throughout the revolutionary process.

We ask ourselves: Why does Mr. Pompeo not ask for support for the millions of young people in this region — the most unequal on the planet — who are victims of unemployment, violence, disease, discrimination and extreme poverty?

The Secretary of State cynically advocates the realization of young Cuban talent by pretending that someone believes in his words, when a simple visit to Cuba or a consultation with the statistics of any international organization of education, science and culture would be enough to deny it: Thousands of doctors, hundreds of talented scientists, renowned artists in all their manifestations, champions in sport, teachers of international merit and dozens of other girls and boys of this land destroy the laughable fallacy of Pompeo.

Cuba hurts them. They know that they have not been and will not be able to reverse our history. They have witnessed the magnificent act of sovereignty that constituted the electoral process in our country, as a result of which the new generations have nurtured all levels of government, reaffirming continuity and destroying the dreams of political change that will allow them to once again be the masters of this island.

We are a generation full of motivation. They will never be able to manipulate us, nor put us at the service of imperialism and its lackeys. We are children of mambisa lineage and of a dignity learned from our historical leaders. We are the owners of our streets, those where today we walk in peace and security. We will not allow them to destroy our dreams; all our forces and energies are at the service of the Revolution.

*From: [www.juventudrebelde.cu](http://www.juventudrebelde.cu)  
A CubaNews translation.  
Edited by Walter Lippmann.*





A new reform-oriented constitution being drafted

could pave the way for same sex marriage, Raul Castro's daughter Mariela Castro Espin says.

She is the director of the National Center for Sex Education, or Cenesex, and promotes policies to help women and the LGBT community.

The National Assembly is drafting a new constitution that will maintain the one-party system but aims to adapt the country to new social and economic times. The current one dates from 1976.

"In the constitution there is a section on rights in which LGBT people must be involved," Castro told AFP in an interview.

"Constitutions do not necessarily get down to specifics. They open doors so later we can talk about changing the legislative system."

#### **Support of current President Miguel Diaz-Canel**

As a member of the Cuban Communist Party, Mariela Castro works to teach leaders as well as everyday citizens about tolerance.

One of them was Miguel Diaz-Canel, who took over as president in April, ending decades of rule by the Castro brothers -- first Fidel and then his brother Raul. Diaz-Canel got tolerance education as a member of the party's youth wing.

"At one time he would go to Cenesex and attend our meeting, and we had a very productive dialogue," Castro said.

She said Cuban society has made progress

on issues involving LGBT rights.

"Before, there was prejudice against talking about these things. Eleven years ago we started holding seminars about homophobia and trans-phobia. And that helped to pave the way for dialogue among the population," she said.

For the past decade Havana has hosted a gay rights parade called the Conga.

"There are people who are bothered by seeing LGBT people dressed up and having fun, and there are those who enjoy it," said Castro.

"We do not want to cause unease but rather instill interest in dialogue," she added.

And it is not just a matter of passing laws: in countries with same sex marriage there can still be high levels of violence against LGBT people, such as in Mexico.

"With marriages, did they stop that violence attitude? No. Bring on laws, of course, but we must work from a policy standpoint and in that we have not made enough progress," said Castro.

From June 25-29 Cenesex is holding a convention on sex education, orientation and therapy.

#### **Erode the patriarchal state**

Castro has recalled that since 1965 abortion has been legal in Cuba and is carried out for free.

"The goal was to save the lives of women and ensure their right to decide what they do with their body," she said.

But in Latin America, a misogynous mindset dating way back still predominates, according to Castro.

Even with women as president in some countries it has been hard to work for gender equality.

"They did not manage to bring about change. Not because the women did not want to but rather they faced very strong political opposition," Castro said.

Cuba also went through periods of resistance to women's rights -- "but we were lucky to have the leadership of Fidel Castro" who in 1960 created the Federation of Cuban Women, she said.

Cuba's national assembly has the highest proportion of women in the world, after that of Rwanda, she argued.

The work that began 60 years ago has helped erode the patriarchal state as the paradigm of power.

"We have not managed to overcome all the symbolic elements of the patriarchal state but we have weakened it."

*June 22, 2018.*

*From: [www.afp.com](http://www.afp.com)*



**Mariela Castro, director of the National Center for Sex Education (Cenesex) with other LGBTQ+ activists at the Conga Against Homophobia and Transphobia in Havana.**



# Interview with Puerto Rican Revolutionary Activists: "We are the best example of the disaster that has been created by the capitalist system"

*Interview by Mike Larson  
Translation by Azza Rojbi*

*Interview by Fire This Time with Puerto Rican revolutionary activists Jocelyn Velázquez and Rogelio Maldonado with the Socialist Front of Puerto Rico. Jocelyn and Rogelio were in New York in June to participate at the meeting of the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization and they spoke on the situation in Puerto Rico at several events in New York. This interview took place in San Juan, Puerto Rico.*

**FTT:** You have just returned from the meeting of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization in New York, please tell us what this meeting was about and what has been achieved regarding the Puerto Rican independence movement?

**Jocelyn Velázquez:** Okay, Puerto Rico was invaded in 1898 by the government of the United States at the start of the Cuban-Spanish-American War. After a long process - which included our demands as part of the decolonization process all over the world and the United Nations' demand for the decolonization of colonized countries - the government of the United States declared that the colonial problem of Puerto Rico had been solved with the creation of the "Free Associated State." Under this name, the government of the United States asked the United Nations to remove Puerto Rico from the list of colonized nations and, therefore, the U.S. no longer has to submit annual reports on the process of decolonization.

We, independentists, from the beginning, have said that what the U.S. claimed to the United Nations is a farce, it is a lie, that the colonial problem has not been solved, that Puerto Rico continues to be a colony and that the "Free Associated State" is simply a different way of calling a colony but that

the colonial characteristics have not disappeared. Despite our opposition, Puerto Rico was removed from the nations listed as colonies and the U.S. no longer has to report to the UN about the situation in Puerto Rico. So we, the independentists, for the past few years consecutively, have attended the United Nations meetings requesting that our case be taken to the plenary of the United Nations and that they include Puerto Rico in the list of colonized nations so that the U.S. is forced to be accountable in front of the UN and resolve the situation.

**FTT:** How would you describe the situation and living conditions after hurricanes Irma and María in Puerto Rico? I refer especially to these days when U.S. officials are awarding medals themselves for the "fantastic" work they have done in Puerto Rico. Telling lies and trying to minimize their failures and the lack of support after the hurricane, including the lie about the death toll. We know that thousands of people died from Hurricane María, but they have tried to hide it. How would you describe the U.S. government and President Donald Trump's actions towards the Puerto Rican people?

**Jocelyn:** For us, the situation since after the hurricane has not improved much. There are still thousands of communities that do not have access to electricity; there are still families whose roofs have not been repaired. Our great concern is that hurricane season has already returned to the island, which means that these families who have not been able to repair their homes



**L to R: Rogelio Maldonado, Jocelyn Velázquez and Mike Larson after the interview.**

will be in the middle of extreme weather conditions without having the ability to protect themselves. The government has also reduced the number of shelters in schools, which are the places that people have been seeking help when their house is affected by adverse weather events.

So we are deeply concerned because the country has not recovered from the last natural disasters, because new extreme environmental situations are likely to happen, and we are not adequately prepared to confront them. During this time of our misfortune, the U.S. government has become an obstacle to our recovery. Instead of bringing aid to the citizens, what the U.S. brought was weapons, what they brought was repression, political persecution, they have restricted access to aid and restricted the support of international countries, for example: the support of Cuba, of Venezuela and many other countries that have expressed their desire to bring medical brigades, to bring energy brigades to help Puerto Rico. Therefore the presence of the U.S. throughout this crisis has been detrimental



**People collecting water from a natural spring created by a landslide in Puerto Rico after the hurricane.**

to us Puerto Ricans, not allowing us to rise as people. The collaboration between the colonial government and the imperialist government of the U.S. is reflected in the figures of those killed by the hurricanes. While the government here claimed for months that there was fewer than a hundred dead, studies and our own experience clearly showed us that the death toll was in the thousands.

Puerto Rico is the best example of what colonialism is, the damage it does to a country and how in a time of crisis, this colonial model leads its citizens to further misery.

**FTT: What are the immediate needs of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Irma and Maria considering we are now about ten months after Maria?**

**Jocelyn:** We continue with the problems of loss of electrical power, there are thousands of communities, families that do not have access to electricity. There are communities that have neither water nor electricity; there are communities where the houses



**Police violence in Puerto Rico against students protesters.**

have not yet been repaired, there are people who have not yet been able to repair their houses because they are still waiting to receive money from the loans that FEMA gave. In addition to that, schools are being closed which limits the number of shelters for people to use.

The government talks about a financial

crisis, their solution to the crisis is to close hospitals, to reduce pensions, to close schools as I mentioned earlier, to take away the rights of workers. So we're going to have an impoverished working class that has not recovered from the first impact of a hurricane within another hurricane season which starts soon. What it tells us is that as a country, if we couldn't deal with a disaster situation like the one we experienced last year, the next catastrophe could be greater.

**FTT: How would you describe the political condition in Puerto Rico especially after Hurricane Maria? I read that there has been more and more repression and suppression of democratic rights. How do you see the current political situation?**

**Jocelyn:** The government since before Maria was talking and saying that they have no money. After the hurricane and when people were so beaten by what had happened, the government has seen a good opportunity to implement a lot of new measures, which they would not have been able to implement otherwise. As I told you before, closing down schools used as shelters, reducing working hours, cutting pensions, closing hospitals and the list goes on.

The people's response has been to defend themselves, to take to the streets, to protest in communities, to protest in schools, to demand more humanity, more compassion and more assistance for their needs from the government. But the response of the state in collaboration with the U.S. government has been consistent, repressing, persecuting, criminalizing the protests, and imprisoning. It was a week ago that a comrade was sentenced to three years in prison and three years of probation in a federal jail. We currently have a dozen comrades with cases in the courts.

The situation is very worrying, the repression that activists are facing is also very worrying, but there is also a climate of resistance and struggle that gives us a lot of hope.

**FTT: Cuba has always been a friend and a supporter of the Puerto Rican people and their struggle for liberation and independence. How would you describe the role of Cuba last week in the UN Special Committee on Decolonization? I have read that Cuba presented a resolution to pass in the general assembly to vote on the independence of Puerto Rico.**

**Jocelyn:** Historically, while other countries took a long view of the situation in Puerto

Rico, Cuba has been consistent in bringing resolutions to the UN. This year it was with a few other countries, sometimes they have presented alone, but they have always continued to seek the support of others and each time have successfully added more countries to the resolution.

The resolution has been unanimously approved for the past few years by all the countries that are members of the UN decolonization committee. So this achievement that, to this day, the endorsement of the resolution has been unanimous is thanks to the work of the Cuban comrades who have historically committed themselves to the cause of our struggle for independence.

**FTT: What would you suggest activists around the world, including Canada, do to help the people of Puerto Rico fight for their independence?**



**Demonstrators march to protest austerity measures in San Juan, Puerto Rico, August 30, 2017.**

**Jocelyn:** What we have always raised is that we need our voices to be reproduced, that they generate an echo, that other activists from all over the world take our cause to their country and explain to their people what is happening in Puerto Rico. This means supporting us with their soul and solidarity, to create the necessary pressure so that the United Nations is forced to take our case to the General Assembly.

Also because our case is the example of what imperialism means, what capitalism means - We are the best example of the disaster that has been created by the capitalist system, an imperialist system that has been imposed on the people of Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is the example for humanity of the disaster that capitalism creates and why it has to be eradicated from the world so that humanity can survive. Our request is always on the one hand the denunciation of our situation and the echo of our cause, on the other that our example is used to show the effects of capitalism, colonialism and imperialism on humanity.

**FTT: Thank you very much**

## Entrevista con Activistas revolucionarios Puertorriqueños:

# "Nosotros somos el mejor ejemplo del desastre que crea el sistema capitalista"

\* EN ESPAÑOL \*

Entrevista por Mike Larson  
Transcripción por Azza Rojbi

Entrevista de la revista *Fire This Time* con dos activistas revolucionarios puertorriqueños, Jocelyn Velázquez y Rogelio Maldonado, del Frente Socialista de Puerto Rico. Jocelyn y Rogelio estuvieron en Nueva York en junio para participar en la reunión del Comité Especial de Descolonización de la ONU y hablaron sobre la situación en Puerto Rico en varias eventos en Nueva York. Esta entrevista tuvo lugar en San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**FTT:** Ustedes acaba de regresar del Comité Especial de Descolonización de las Naciones Unidas ONU in Nueva York, por favor digamos de que se trata esta reunion y que se ha logrado al respecto del movimiento independentista puertorriqueño?

**Jocelyn Velázquez:** Okay, Puerto Rico fue invadido en 1898 por el gobierno de los estados unidos al raíz de la guerra cubana-hispanoamericana. Después de un proceso largo en el cual reclamo como parte del proceso de descolonización en diferentes partes del mundo y el reclamo de la ONU de la descolonización de los países colonizados, el gobierno de los estados unidos plantea que el problema colonial de Puerto Rico había sido solucionado con la creación del "estado libre asociado". Bajo ese nombre el gobierno de los estados unidos pide a las Naciones Unidas que saque a Puerto Rico de la lista de naciones colonizadas y que por lo tanto no se tenga que rinde informes anuales sobre el proceso para su descolonización.

Nosotros los independentistas desde un principio planteamos que lo que los EEUU llevaba a las Naciones Unidas era una farsa, era una mentira, que el problema colonial no se había resuelto, que Puerto Rico continua haciendo una colonia y que



Jocelyn Velázquez hablando en contra de la privatización de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE) en Puerto Rico.

el "estado libre asociado" era simplemente una manera distinta de llamar a la colonia pero que las características coloniales no habían desaparecido. A pesar de nuestra oposición, Puerto Rico es sacado de las naciones catalogadas como colonias y EEUU al presente no tiene que informarle a la ONU sobre la situación de Puerto Rico, así que nosotros los independentistas por los pasado años consecutivamente hemos asistido a la Naciones Unidas solicitando que nuestro caso se ha llevado al pleno de las Naciones Unidas y que el pleno se vuelva a incluir a Puerto Rico en la lista de naciones colonizadas para que EEUU se vea obligado a rendir cuenta y a solucionar la situación.

**FTT:** ¿Cómo describirías la situación y las condiciones de vida después de los huracanes Irma y María en Puerto Rico? Me refiero a los funcionarios estadounidenses que se otorgan medallas entre ellos por el "fantástico" trabajo que han realizado en Puerto Rico. Lanzando mentiras y tratando de minimizar el fracaso y la falta de apoyo después del huracán, incluida la mentira acerca de la cifra de muertos que ya conocemos que miles de personas morían por el huracán María, pero ellos trataron de ocultarlo. ¿Cómo describirías las acciones del gobierno de los EEUU y el presidente Donald Trump hacia el pueblo puertorriqueño?

**Jocelyn:** Para nosotros la situación después del huracán pues no ha mejorado demasiado. Todavía hay miles de comunidades que no tiene acceso al servicio eléctrico, todavía hay familias que su techos tienen toldos que no se ha hecho reparado. Nuestra gran preocupación es que ya volvimos entrar la temporada de huracanes lo que significa es que estas familias que no han podido reparar a sus hogares van a estar en puesta a la inclemencia del tiempo sin tener la capacidad de protegerse y el gobierno ha

reducido los refugios en escuelas que son los lugares donde las personas llevan a buscar socorro cuando su casa era afectada por eventos climatológicos.

Así que si tenemos una gran preocupación porque el país no se ha recuperado de los desastres naturales porque probablemente vengan nuevas situaciones ambientales y no tenemos la capacidad afrontarla y para nuestra desgracia el gobierno de EEUU se ha convertido a un vericueto a nuestra recuperación. Al lugar de traer a ayuda a la ciudadanía, lo que trajo fue armas, lo que ha traído fue represión, persecución política, ha restringido el acceso a la ayuda, ha restringido el apoyo de países internacionales, el apoyo de Cuba, de Venezuela y muchos otros países que han manifestado su deseo de traer brigadas medicas, de traer brigadas energéticas. Así que la presencia de EEUU en esta crisis ha sido detriental para nosotros los puertorriqueños todavía no los permiten levantarlos y ese colaboración entre el gobierno colonial y el gobierno imperial de los EEUU se refleja en las cifras de los muertos. Mientras el gobierno de aquí catalogaban que había menos de cien muertos y afirme durante meses que era menos de cien muertos, estudios y nuestra propia experiencia personal nos decía que los muertos iban por miles.

Así que Puerto Rico es el mejor ejemplo de lo que es el colonialismo, del daño que le hace a un país y de como este modelo colonial en una crisis lo que hace es llevar a los ciudadanos a la miseria.

**FTT:** ¿Cuáles son las necesidades inmediatas para Puerto Rico después del huracán Irma y María considerando diez meses después?

**Jocelyn:** Seguimos con los problemas de la luz, hay miles de comunidades, familias que no tienen el acceso a la luz. Hay comunidades que no tienen ni agua ni luz,



La situación de Puerto Rico después del huracán María.

hay comunidades donde las casas todavía no han sido reparadas, hay gente que todavía no ha podido reparar su casas porque no han recibido el dinero de los préstamos que dio FEMA y se están cerrando escuelas, eso limita la cantidad de refugios.

El gobierno habla de una crisis fiscal, para no ser en la crisis fiscal va a cerrar hospitales, va a reducir las pensiones, esta cerrando las escuelas como lo dijo anteriormente, esta quitando los derechos a los trabajadores. Así que vamos a tener una clase trabajadora empobrecida que no se ha recuperado de un primer impacto de un huracán dentro de otro temporal de huracanes. Lo que nos dice es que como país si no podemos encontrar con una situación climatológica como la que vivimos el año pasado la catastrofe puede ser mayor.

**FTT:** ¿Cómo describiría la situación política en Puerto Rico especialmente después del huracán María? Leí que se impuso más y más represión y supresión de los derechos democráticos. ¿Cómo ves el desarrollo político actual?

**Jocelyn:** El gobierno desde antes de María estuvo hablando de la y planteando que no había dinero. Después del huracán y de que la gente estaba tan golpeada por lo que haya pasado, el gobierno ha visto un buen oportunidad para implementar un montón de medidas que de otra forma no había podido implementar. Este como te dije antes, cierre de escuelas, reducción de la jornada de trabajo, reducción de las pensiones, cierre de hospitales, puedo a seguir enumerando.

La respuesta del pueblo ha sido defenderse, tirarse a la calle, protestar en comunidades, protestar en escuelas, reclamándole al gobierno más humanidad, más compasión y que se atienda a su necesidades. Pero la respuesta del estado en colaboración con el gobierno de los EEUU ha sido consistente, reprimir, perseguir, criminalizar las

protestas, encarcelar. Ha pena hace una semana una compañera fue condenada a tres años de cárcel y 3 años de probatoria en una cárcel federal, actualmente tenemos docena de compañeras con casos en las cortes.

La situación es bien preocupante, la represión que encontré los activistas también es bien preocupante pero también hay un clima de resistencia y de lucha que nos da mucha esperanza.

**FTT:** Cuba siempre ha sido un amigo y un defensor del pueblo puertorriqueño y su lucha por la liberación y la independencia. ¿Cómo describiría el papel de Cuba en la última semana en la Comisión Especial de Descolonización de la ONU? He leído que Cuba presentó una resolución para aprobar en la asamblea general para votar sobre la independencia de Puerto Rico.

**Jocelyn:** Históricamente, mientras otros países hicieron de la vista larga sobre la



El colectivo "Se acabaron las promesas" participando en las Fiestas de la Calle San Sebastián.

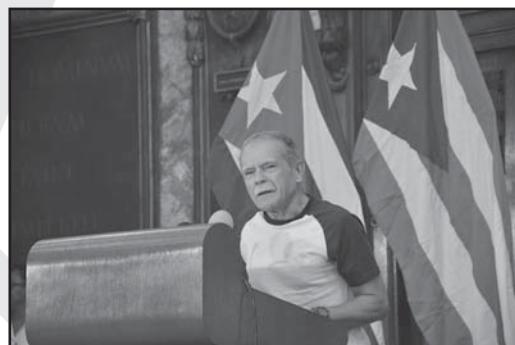
situación de Puerto Rico, Cuba ha sido consistente en llevar las resoluciones. El año fue con bien poca gente, a veces ellos solo

pero se ha seguido buscando el apoyo de otros países y cada vez ha sumado más países a la resolución.

La resolución es aprobada por unanimidad por los pasados años, ha sido aprobada unánimemente por todos los países que son miembros del comité de descolonización. Así que ese logro que al día de hoy, el aval de esa resolución sea unánime es gracias al trabajo de las compañeras y compañeros cubanos quienes se han comprometido históricamente con la causa de nuestra lucha de independencia.

**FTT:** ¿Qué sugerías a activistas en todo el mundo y también Canadá para ayudar a la lucha del pueblo de Puerto Rico por su independencia?

**Jocelyn:** Lo que nosotros siempre hemos planteado es que necesitamos que nuestras voces se reproduzcan, que se conviertan en eco, que los demás



El luchador independentista puertorriqueño Oscar López Rivera hablando con los jóvenes de Cuba.

activistas de todos partes del mundo tomen nuestra causa, y la llevan a sus países y les expliquen a sus países lo que está pasando en Puerto Rico para apoyar de un alma y de solidaridad, por crear la presión necesaria por las naciones unidas se vea obligada a llevar nuestro caso ante la asamblea general. También porque nuestro caso es el ejemplo de lo que significa el imperialismo, lo que significa el capitalismo. Nosotros somos el mejor ejemplo del desastre que crea un sistema capitalista, un sistema imperialista que ha sido impuesto en Puerto Rico. Así que Puerto Rico es el ejemplo que se ve a demostrar a la humanidad del desastre que crea el capitalismo y porque tiene que ser erradicado del mundo para que la humanidad pueda sobrevivir. Nuestra petición siempre es por un lado la denuncia de nuestra situación y que se ha un eco, por otro que utiliza nuestro ejemplo como una muestra de los efectos del capitalismo, del coloniaje y del imperialismo sobre la humanidad.

**FTT:** Muchas gracias.

# Cuba & UN reaffirm support for PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE

Translated by Azza Rojbi

The Permanent Representative of Cuba to the UN, Anayansi Rodríguez, reaffirmed today that her country will continue to support Puerto Rico in its demand for independence and sovereignty against the colonial rule of the United States.

For Cuba, it is a historical commitment to continue battling alongside the Puerto Rican people and facing the country that keeps them under colonial rule, she told PL regarding the resolution approved the previous day in the United Nations Special Committee for Decolonization.

The Cuban delegation is very satisfied that, once again, and for 37 consecutive times, the draft resolution that advocates the independence of Puerto Rican territory has been approved.

This is a call by the Special Committee for Decolonization to the international community in order to support the legitimate rights of the people of Puerto Rico, said the ambassador.

Cuba will not rest, will not relent in its efforts within the framework of the United Nations until the final victory is achieved, until it sees a free and independent Puerto Rico exercising full right to its sovereignty, she stressed.

In addition, she said, for Cuba it is an honor to present this resolution that defends the right of a sister Caribbean nation.

This resolution is the 37th presented to the Special Committee of Decolonization on the demand of independence for Puerto Rico, and the last 19 times it was approved by consensus, which shows the



**The Permanent Representative of Cuba to the UN, Anayansi Rodríguez, speaks at the UN, June 19, 2018.**

support of different countries to the Puerto Rican cause.

Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Syria,

Russia, and Antigua and Barbuda were co-sponsors of the resolution from this year.

This document also reiterates the Latin American and Caribbean character of Puerto Rico, with its own and unmistakable national identity, and urges the US Government to promote a process that allows the people of Puerto Rico to exercise their right to self-determination, independence and decision-making.

For their part, the petitioners who participated in yesterday's session highlighted the decline in the Puerto Rican economy and the lack of response from the local government to deal with the crisis after the hurricanes of the previous year, as well as the abandonment by the American administration.

They also demanded that the Puerto Rican people should decide the destiny of their country, not a fiscal control board imposed by the US Congress, or any other foreign body.

*From: Prensa Latina*

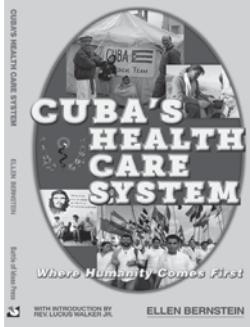
**Battle of Ideas Press**

## CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

*"The unfailing dedication of Cuban health care professionals has led to dramatic improvements in quality of life, for millions of people who previously had no other hope of receiving decent medical care. IFCO/Pastors for Peace is pleased to honor the diligent health care professionals of the Cuban health care system. We especially pay tribute to Cuba's national leadership, whose vision of universal health care as a right of every citizen sets an example for the world."*

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003. She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.

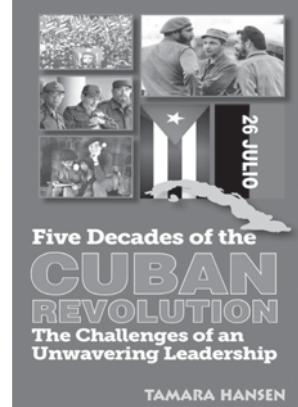


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## 5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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# INTERNATIONALISM IN ACTION. CUBAN MEDICAL TEAM AIDS GUATEMALA IN TIME OF CRISIS



By Tamara Hansen

Disaster and tragedy struck the people of Guatemala as the Fuego volcano erupted on Sunday, June 3, 2018. According to a CNN report, "Towns were engulfed by thick, heavy ash from Sunday's sudden eruption. Hot gases, rock and ash, raced down the volcano, killing dozens, erasing hillside communities, blocking roads and leaving behind steaming debris that rescuers had trouble navigating." This was the Central American country's most severe volcanic eruption in 45 years. Over 100 people were killed, and nearly 200 are missing, most presumed killed by the devastating blast. Over 1,600 families lost their homes.

The tragedy of that day was not only due to the forces of mother nature. Evacuations of communities were delayed due to poor communication by Guatemala's National Coordination for Disaster Reduction (Conred). BBC journalist Will Grant reports, "The national institute for seismology and volcanology says that its conscience is clear, that it issued the relevant warning in plenty of time. It claims responsibility for any failings lies with the civil emergency authority, Conred, which didn't then act on its warnings."

Calls for aid and assistance for Guatemala have rung out around the world. NGOs, church groups, families, individuals and governments have all pledged help to Guatemala since June 3.

## Cuba Arrived 20 Years Ago to Support Guatemala

Cuba's Granma newspaper published an article titled, "Cuba arrived 20 years ago to support Guatemala."

According to Yuri Batista, the national

coordinator of the Cuban Medical Brigade (BMC), Cuba has 431 specialists working in 16 out of 20 departments in Guatemala (departments are similar to states or provinces), including many remote regions of the country. The BMC has been supporting these areas for two decades. Of the 431 Cubans currently in Guatemala, 245 are doctors and 136 nurses. In particular, 39 are members of the "Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade," which specializes in providing medical relief in disaster zones. Cuba's "Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade" is recognized world-wide and recently won a prestigious international award from the World Health Organization (see *Fire This Time* Volume 11 Issue 6).

The first Cuban collaborators arrived in Guatemala on November 5, 1998, to aid victims of Hurricane Mitch. In the past 20 years, Cuban medical specialists have provided over 43 million medical consultations in Guatemala alone.

Since 2006, Cuba's Misión Milagro (Operation Miracle) has helped 185,023 patients recover their eyesight in Guatemala. Misión Milagro is a campaign to remove cataracts and restore eyesight, which Cuba has developed in partnership with governments around the world. It was initiated in 2004 by Comandante Fidel Castro, leader of the Cuban revolution. As of this spring, Misión Milagro has successfully completed over 3 million eye operations in 34 countries.

## Cuban Medical Specialists Around the World

Cuba's commitment to the people of Guatemala reminds us that free and universal healthcare should be recognized as



Cuban doctors caring for victims of the Fuego Volcano in Escuintla, Guatemala



a fundamental right for all of humanity. As the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tweeted in April 2018, "Cuba is an example for the world."

Cuba's solidarity does not begin and end in Guatemala. According to the World Health Organization Cuba's "Henry Reeve International Medical Brigade" has travelled to 21 countries to help more than 3.5 million people affected by emergency disasters and epidemics, saving an estimated 80,000 lives since its creation after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Similarly, 101 Cuban doctors just arrived in Nairobi, Kenya on June 8 to begin a new medical mission in partnership with the government of that country.

Cuba's healthcare initiatives are not only for the world. The Cuban people also benefit from a world-class revolutionary internationalist preventative healthcare system. Cuba's infant mortality rate is 4.4 per 1,000 live births, the lowest rate in the Americas (including that of the United States: 5.8 and Canada: 4.5). At birth, Cubans are expected to live almost 80 years, one of the longest average lifespans in the Americas. Cuba also has the highest ratio of skilled health professionals to the population in the Americas, with 155 skilled professionals to 10 000 people (including that of the United States: 117.8 and Canada: 119.5). It is because Cuba has an abundance of highly trained medical professionals that the country can spread its revolutionary internationalist medical workers all over the world while maintaining high standards for the Cuban people at home.

While the people of Guatemala are facing a real challenge in healing and rebuilding after the Fuego Volcano disaster, their strong spirit and perseverance together with the generosity and determination of Cuban medical professionals shows us the power of international solidarity and putting human health and development first.

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01



Cuban doctors providing medical care in Guatemala, years before the recent Fuego Volcano crisis



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# THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

## Its Present-Day Relevance

By John Riddell

Below is an excerpt of a talk by John Riddell, given to The Capitalism Workshop ([thecapitalismworkshop.com](http://thecapitalismworkshop.com)) in Toronto, on April 18, 2018. John Riddell is a Marxist historian who has been active in the revolutionary socialist movement in Canada, the U.S., and Europe since the 1960s. He is the editor of a series of important books about the history of the Communist International (also called the Comintern or Third International), which he has been researching and writing for more than 35 years. His books in this series include: "Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International", "The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power", "Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!", "To See the Dawn! Baku, 1920 First Congress of the Peoples of the East", "Toward the United Front", and "To the Masses." His books are available on following websites

Pathfinder Press: [www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com)

Haymarket Press: [www.haymarketbooks.org](http://www.haymarketbooks.org)

To read his complete talk, please visit John Riddell's blog: [johnriddell.wordpress.com](http://johnriddell.wordpress.com)

any revolutionary socialist organization or revolutionary movement to overthrow capitalism.

As well, since our formation Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice has worked to build its policies and activities based on the first four congresses of the Third International or Comintern. We encourage our dear readers to study our basis of unity which we have written and improved many times in the last ten years, on page 21 of this issue of Fire This Time. Part of building an effective and strong revolutionary socialist organization or movement includes ideological battles, debates, and challenges. Lenin once said, Marxism is a revolutionary theory and therefore fundamentally polemical. We couldn't be more in agreement with Lenin. John Riddell's books are an important contribution and useful tools in the process of critical thinking and development of a revolutionary socialist working-class program.

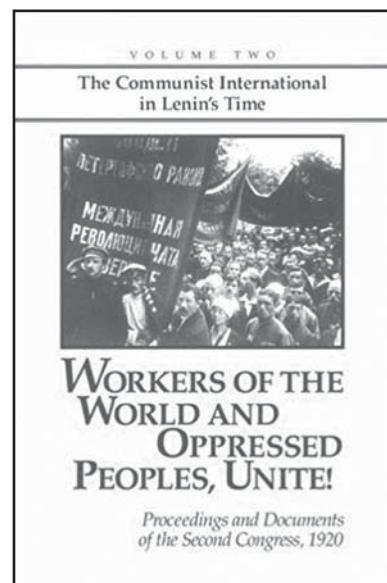
Fire This Time newspaper Editorial Board

We found this talk an excellent introduction to understanding the importance of the Comintern's history. In our opinion, these books are part of the necessary arsenal for today's revolutionary socialists as they hold essential revolutionary socialist thoughts, theories and debates for developing our strategy and tactics.

While a vast majority of the leftist movement today is ignoring these treasures for understanding class struggle, we must think of Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution, who urged revolutionaries to develop and understand the methodology of Marxism and its application of concrete analysis of the concrete situation. As Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice, we wish to propagate how essential and fundamental it is to study the history of the Comintern for today's anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle. As well as its great relevancy for building

anti-imperialist solidarity, defense of victims of oppression, and other fields of work.

Congresses stretched over several weeks, and their complete proceedings were transcribed, translated, and published. A day's proceedings hit print within ten days. Think of it as a Comintern version of YouTube: thousands of pages of published debates and documents, plus updates of news and analysis every few days in French, German, Russian, and English.



My work aimed to make the core of this record available to today's socialists, in the belief that the Comintern's ideas spoke to our times. The project has never had a base in the universities; none of us had academic or professional qualifications. It was an effort by activists to achieve activist goals:

- To break with the scriptural approach to early Communist history, that focuses on Lenin's writings, by providing a rich

historical context.

- To display international Communism as a working community and its leadership as a broad, inclusive team.
- To block the imposition of authorized interpretations of workers' history by facilitating independent study of primary sources.
- To highlight the agency of front-line parties and their forgotten leaders in shaping the Comintern. To challenge the then-prevailing interpretation that Moscow decided all.
- To display the Comintern's politics as a strategic system for global struggle, embracing interwoven positions on a wide spectrum of issues.
- To encourage rapprochement among revolutionary Marxists of different schools on the common ground of early Comintern positions.

### Resonance in our century

When the new International was formed in 1919, hopes were high that workers would take power within months across much of Europe. Lenin then wrote that the concept of soviets has "triumphed throughout the world," in a movement of "tens of millions of workers sweeping everything from their path." (*Founding the Communist International*, p. 302)

So much has changed since that time. The revolutionary subject — the working class — has been weakened under neoliberalism. The socialist movement has declined worldwide. There is no immediate prospect of workers' power.

Yet already in its first year, the Comintern began to grapple with how Marxists should function in a non-revolutionary society. Its early decisions provide a road map for such conditions. In that sense, the Comintern lies on our side of the historical divide separating us from the time of the Russian revolution.

After the end of World War 2, world capitalism went through an era of structural reform, in which workers won many gains. Today, however, workers cannot win significant reforms without confronting the question of political power.

Questions of strategy now come to the fore: alliance among dissimilar movements, intersectionality, links between revolutionary groups and mass struggles, expression of socialist politics through mass-based political parties.

In this context, the Comintern example is instructive. Its national units were mass parties closely linked to an even broader layer of socialist-minded workers. The parties had wide support among oppressed and alienated layers outside the proletariat. They were marked by a close interrelationship between the party and the surrounding movement and class. Most of the time, each party was divided into currents reflecting different outlooks within the working class as a whole. They debated such differences before the working class as a whole and had a good record of resolving them constructively. By and large, the early Comintern kept diverse revolutionary forces joined in a single movement.

That is so different from what we see today! We have none of this. But surely, for socialism to go forward, we must develop these capacities.

### Crisis of productive system

The Comintern's formation responded to a profound crisis of world capitalism expressed through global war. Marxists believed that this disaster was rooted in the contradictions of the productive system. Three months after the war's outbreak, Leon Trotsky advanced this view, rewording a famous statement of Marx:

The present war is basically a revolt of the productive forces developed by capitalism against the nation-state form of their exploitation. Today the entire globe has become the arena of a worldwide economy... [forcing] capitalist states into a struggle for ... the profit interests of each national bourgeoisie. (Lenin's Struggle for a Revolutionary International, p. 150)

Capitalists profited from the war even as it destroyed the use values on which production rests.

The present-day trend to environmental breakdown operates in similar fashion. Capitalism heaps up profits while destroying the material basis of production. The crisis can be remedied — and profitably too — but only if the nationally based groups of capitalists act in concert. But that is barred by what Trotsky called "the nation-state form of exploitation." This tends toward reproducing the conditions identified by Marx as necessary for social revolution. The process is slower than in 1914 — yet fast enough to have figured in the Syrian catastrophe of this decade.

As things stand, it is hard to see how calamity can be avoided unless populations around the world can assert their common interest in survival and escape from the prison of a now-dysfunctional productive system. Although far from a sure thing, it's a goal worth pursuing.

Our common task today thus has an uncanny resemblance to the task assumed a century ago by the Communist International.

### Constructing a strategy

The Comintern's early congresses consisted of a step-by-step effort to develop a strategic system — that is, a framework of policies that shaped its parties' recruitment, education, and intervention. Revolutionary strategy was then defined as "a combined system of actions which by their association, consistency, and growth must lead the proletariat to

the conquest of power." (Trotsky, Third International after Lenin)

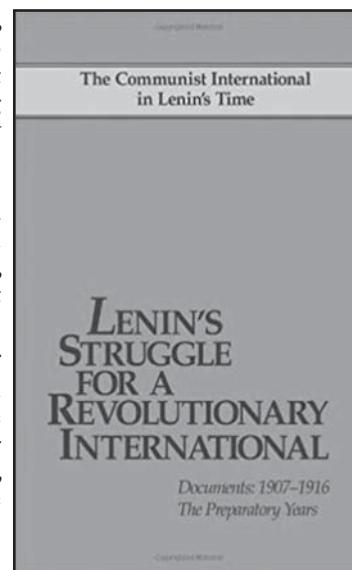
The reverse side of my handout lists the major elements of early Comintern strategy, specifying when each element was adopted. You see the main components: the Soviet model of workers' rule, the role of a revolutionary party, and the process through which it can gain social hegemony: alliances with oppressed peoples and social layers; unity with non-revolutionary forces.

Despite the enormous shift in social context in the last century, this broad strategic framework remains relevant today. It does not tell us what to do; it does not "teach lessons." The value of workers' history lies rather in expanding the vocabulary of our imagination. In that spirit, I'm going to suggest three linkages between Comintern policies and today's tasks.

But first, we must note that developing this strategic system was marked by a convulsive crisis.

### 1921: A strategic rift

During the Second Congress in 1920, the Red Army was advancing victoriously toward Warsaw, raising hopes in Moscow that its triumph would spark a German revolution and thus tilt the world balance toward socialism. But the Soviet forces were defeated and forced to retreat. Capitalist governments regained stability; the workers' upsurge ebbed. Although the Comintern built parties of hundreds of thousands



in Germany, France, and beyond, they remained blocked by the persistent strength of reform-oriented social democracy.

Within the Comintern, two counterposed responses were advanced, both originating in Germany. They later became known as “the policy of the offensive” and “the united front.”

The “offensive” referred to here was a plan to throw the Communist forces into a confrontation with the government in the hope that a bold initiative would draw the worker masses into struggle. This was tried in Germany in March 1921 with disastrous results. Still, when the Third Congress assembled that summer, supporters of the “offensive” were in the majority.

“Something is wrong in the International,” Lenin told Congress delegates. “We must say: Stop! Otherwise the Communist International is lost.” (*To the Masses* [Third World Congress], p. 25)

My Third Congress volume tells a gripping story of how the International set its course toward united front policy — that is, a campaign to unite with non-Communist workers and their organizations in militant action. Yet the new policy was not fully accepted in the ranks, and the debate erupted again only two years later.

### The Third Congress bugbear

The Third Congress marked a shift in balance between the Russian Communist Party and the Comintern’s other member parties. According to the conventional interpretation, the Russian leaders were fully in command from the start and their authority only expanded with the passage of time. That is a fair description of the later Stalin years. But during the Comintern’s early period, there was a trend in the other direction. Once the Comintern had built mass parties outside Russia, they increasingly put their stamp on its debates. That was evident at the Third and Fourth Congresses, which were dominated by debate on initiatives in the Italian and German parties.

### What is centralism?

The Third Congress crisis also reflected a breakdown in Comintern centralism — that is, its ability, on the great issues, to discuss, decide, and act in concert. The need for this capacity had been the great lesson of 1914, when the Second International had collapsed into warring national components.

Still, centralism was often misunderstood as meaning as a military command structure. The 1921 breakdown showed the limits of such top-down leadership, limits that were as Clara Zetkin pointed out at the time as inherent and unavoidable. The contradiction was left unresolved, and a few years later the concept of hierarchical discipline triumphed. This misunderstanding of centralism persists even today.

### Unity against imperialism

The Comintern undertook to reorient global socialism toward support of anti-imperialist movements in the colonies and semi-colonies. Most of these movements were “bourgeois” in character, that is, they did not challenge capitalist relations. How should the Comintern relate to

them? Communists from colonial countries had conflicting views, and the debate wound its way through the early congresses. In 1920, Lenin expressed the Comintern’s conclusion:

“We, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organizing in a revolutionary spirit.” (Report on National and Colonial Questions)

After Lenin’s death, the Comintern backed away from this conception, with bad results.

I’d like to suggest three present-day applications of this policy. Today, there are few remaining colonies in the classical sense, but imperialism, in recent decades, has diminished the limited sovereignty of post-colonial states. Should socialists defend subordinate capitalist countries that run afoul of imperialism and come under attack? Consider Iran.

Also, how should we relate to insurgent popular movements today whose social dynamic is unclear, which may not be, in Lenin’s words, “genuinely revolutionary?” Consider the so-called “colour revolutions” in Ukraine and elsewhere.

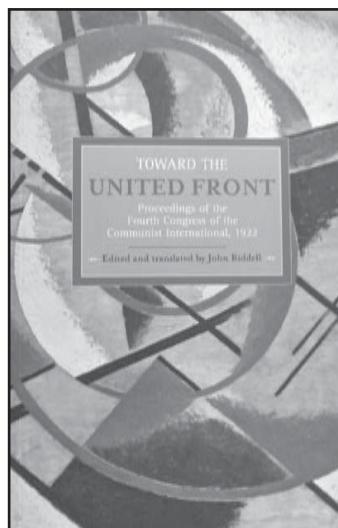
Third, the early Comintern also embraced the revolutionary approach to Black liberation that we now know as pan-Africanism, later upheld by Cuban Marxists and by Malcolm X and still a factor in revolutionary thought today.

### The Communist Women’s Movement

During the Comintern’s first years, structures for work among women were set up in most sections and coordinated through a secretariat in Berlin. This movement encountered what Zetkin, who led this work, called “open or covert opposition” in Communist parties. The women heading up this work were in my view the most able and resilient international leadership team produced by the Comintern. Their journal, *Communist Women’s International*, was a formidable educational tool, expressing the thinking of the International’s most consistent defenders of united front policy. (See “The Communist Women’s Movement”)

In many ways, their movement strikes us today as incomplete. For example, they wrote little on sexual violence against women. But their overall vision was radical. “Private property is the ultimate and fundamental cause” of male domination, they said; it must be replaced by social property. Women must be “fully integrated into social production,” and the social reproduction of labour — that is, issues related to childbirth and child-rearing — revolutionized.

This outlook is inherently intersectional. It links women’s struggles to those of other oppressed and exploited sectors. But it goes further: it sees such movements as joining in an assault on capitalism itself.



Despite the efforts of these women, Marxist movements of that era remained overwhelmingly masculine in composition. And even today, despite women’s historic gains, this imbalance is still found in most Marxist movements. We should reflect on why this is so.

### The United Front

Now let us consider the present-day implications of Comintern’s united front policy. Its goal was specific to its time: to engage with socially conscious workers who were loyal to reformist Social Democratic parties.

United front policy operated on three interrelated levels.

- First, it referred to an effort to forge organizational unity with progressive forces aligned against Communism in a campaign for broadly agreed-on goals.
- Second, it advanced a program of immediate, democratic, and transitional demands. The last term, transitional, refers to demands rooted in today's conditions that infringe on the rights of private property. Consider a present-day anti-tar sands protest: it typically demands "prevent oil spills" and "stop the pipeline" (immediate demands), "respect Indigenous land rights" (democratic), "keep the oil in the

# FIRE THIS TIME MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

## BASIS OF UNITY

Humanity today is threatened by war, economic crises, starvation, poverty and crime: all created by the drive of capitalists and imperialist powers to maximize their profits at the expense of the people of the world. To oppose each of these crimes against humanity, we must focus all of our work and action to build a foundation to advance the interest of an overall struggle of working and oppressed people against international capital, its tools of dividing the working class, and its local oppressive institutions. The fundamental principle of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice is to promote in action the unity and active solidarity of all poor and working people, locally and internationally. We must recognize that this principle is meaningless without active struggle, because the pursuit of this principle goes sharply against the interest of the ruling capitalist class and they will use whatever means they have at their disposal to keep us divided and hostile amongst ourselves.

Fire This Time is a revolutionary socialist movement for dismantling capitalism and imperialism with a mass majority of working and oppressed people to create a world without oppression and exploitation. We are a politically based action organization committed to building the social and political power of poor and working people in BC, Canada and internationally. We believe the only way to effectively challenge the capitalist and imperialist states and governments and their corporate agenda is through the organization of masses of people in motion in workplaces, communities and in the streets. We are dedicated to mobilizing and unifying poor and working people against the all forms of capitalist governments and their anti-poor,

soil" (a confiscation of capitalist property, and thus transitional) ☐ a neat combination of three programmatic levels.

- Third, a call for a workers' government. That is, a regime of one or many workers' organizations that draws its authority from mass movements of working people and acts on their demands. Such a government might be formed in parliament but is independent of the bourgeoisie and can open the road to true workers' power.

These concepts are valid beyond the original context of seeking alliance with reform-minded workers. They are the core

anti-working class legislation and policies. We are committed to organizing with working and poor people from the most attacked and exploited communities in Canada and beyond: communities of colour, immigrants, refugees, "illegals", low-wage workers, people with disabilities, queer people, indigenous communities, unemployed people and low-income families. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation: from sexism to racism, from homophobia to colonialism and all other institutions, thought, beliefs, actions and behaviors that humiliate and demean people to bring hostility and division amongst us.

Our movement must be integrated in the wider revolutionary context of international struggle against capitalism and imperialism; although we are mainly engaged in local politics, in essence the scope of our work is internationalist. Supporting the struggles of oppressed people abroad weakens the hegemony and power of the capitalist class in other lands and consequently weakens their rule at home, therefore aiding the battles of oppressed people in Canada against their own government. In addition, the practice of international solidarity solidifies the co-operation essential in building a world movement for social justice. We must expand on this both implicitly and explicitly to make the connections relevant to people's daily domestic struggle, to overcome geographic division, and to make it clear that when we engage in struggle we do not struggle alone but alongside millions of working and poor people around the world. Within capitalist and imperialist global domination there is no local struggle that does not have an international character. Every international is local and every local is international.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice will support and engage with other progressive and revolutionary movements and struggles whether for immediate or long-term demands, locally, nationally and internationally in united front or any other united effort and organizations. Our main goal is to end poverty and injustice through education, participation, agitation and direct action. We seek to reach a collective level of mass consciousness that allows oppressed people to think socially and act politically to achieve social justice locally and internationally by any means necessary.

[www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net)

of a strategic framework for Marxism in non-revolutionary times. They are highly controversial, even among those who look to the early Comintern. They deserve study and discussion.

Another troubled topic is how to balance the goal of serving the working class as a whole with that of building one's own organization. This is posed every time we launch a broad campaign. Ideally, the two aims go hand in hand, but in practice, it is all too tempting to act in a way that maximizes potential for recruitment at the cost of a campaign's broad effectiveness. That is what we commonly call "sectarianism." A small socialist group focused on its next handful of recruits often finds that sectarianism pays ☐ for the small group, but unfortunately not for the working class.

There is language in some Comintern texts that could suggest a sectarian reading of the united front concept. The Comintern insisted that the united front served both to build the party and advance the cause of workers as a whole. It sought to build united fronts that were inclusive, democratic in decision making, and consistent in serving the broader goals of the working class. That goal is worth pursuing today.

And through all this, working people globally are claiming their own history as part of their struggle for emancipation. Let us all join in pursuing this goal.

### To Build a United Front: Revolutionary Masses in Motion

Iran's first women's march on International Women's Day, March 8, 1979, one month after millions of Iranian people overthrew the monarchy. The partially seen banner reads "Equal Rights for Women" and partially seen sign reads "We Demand Compulsory Education for Women." Photo credit: Ali Yerevani 1979



# IMPERIALISTS TIGHTEN SANCTIONS AGAINST VENEZUELA



by Alison Bodine

When the people of Venezuela re-elected Nicolás Maduro as the President of Venezuela on May 20, 2018, they knew that this would mean more foreign sanctions would be coming. Immediately following the election, the governments of the U.S. and Canada followed through on their threats and did just that; imposed further sanctions in an attempt to force the overthrow of the independent and democratically elected government of Venezuela.

Then, on June 25, 2018, the 28 countries of the European Union (E.U.) added 11 Venezuelans to their list of persons facing an asset freeze and travel ban. In their decision to impose further sanctions, the E.U. claims that the "listed are responsible for human rights violations and for undermining democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela," for which they provide no evidence. They also claim that the May 20 elections "were neither free nor fair and their outcome lacked any credibility as the electoral process did not ensure the necessary guarantees for them to be inclusive and democratic," for which they also provide zero proof.

In response, the government of Venezuela issued a statement exposing the shameful intentions of the European Union. The statement declares that imposing sanctions, "constitutes a clear interference in the sovereign affairs of our country, by adopting alleged restrictive measures contrary to international law" And that "The European Union undermines political peace in Venezuela by meddling in its internal affairs and endeavoring to apply coercive measures that undermine tranquility and dialogue between Venezuelans."

The Venezuelans on this list include the new Vice President of Venezuela, and leader of the Bolivarian revolutionary process, Delcy Rodríguez, who they have accused of undermining "democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela." In response, Delcy Rodríguez sent out three powerful Tweets (@DRodriguez\_en), directed right at the European Union and Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the E.U. for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

"1. Personal message to the European Union vis-a-vis its illegal measures: As



a Venezuelan woman committed to the defence of my Homeland, I ratify my determination to defend the rights to Peace, democracy, national independence and self-determination; rights that I have as a citizen of this great country. 2. No threat, arbitrary extortion measure of blackmail will distract me from my commitment to the history of freedom, dignity and sovereignty inherited by Simon Bolívar! The old imperial world will never yield my determination as a Venezuelan to love the Nation where I was born. 3. I take this opportunity to authorize Senior Representative @FedericaMog [Federica Mogherini] to dispose, on my behalf, of these alleged assets, which don't exist, indeed! And assign them to the migration crisis provoked with your belligerent, racist and xenophobic policies!"

## Why is the E.U. Targeting Venezuela?

The day that the sanctions were announced, right-wing U.S. Senator Marco Rubio took to Twitter to "congratulate" the E.U. for their illegal actions.

However, contrary to the claims of the U.S., Canada and the E.U., the May 20 election was free and fair. President Nicolas Maduro was re-elected with 68% of the vote, in a fully-electronic and audited election using an election process that has been declared by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter as "the



Marco Rubio @marcorubio - Jun 25

Wonder if after @EU\_Commission hit 11 more cronies of #Venezuela dictator @NicolasMaduro with sanctions, he & those around him have finally figured out that fake election on May 20 only made things worse for them? Real democracy is only way out!



European Union hits 11 more Venezuelans with sanctions

The European Union hit 11 current and former Venezuelan officials with sanctions Monday, as the country continues to face condemnation over the... [miamiherald.com](http://miamiherald.com)

**Tweet in support of the illegal E.U. sanctions on Venezuela from right-wing U.S. Senator Marco Rubio**

best in the world."

In fact, what they are angry about is that the victory of President Maduro has put the revolutionary movement in Venezuela in a better position. This has made imperialist governments, like the United States and their allies, more afraid of what is going to happen in Venezuela. They are increasingly concerned about their interests and investments in Venezuela and therefore are working harder to force the government of Venezuela to take on more capitalist measures.

This is the point of the sanctions: to tighten the screws against the Venezuelan economy until the government and the people of Venezuela cave into the pressure and hardship, and Venezuela is forced to abandon the Bolivarian revolutionary process. Imperialist governments want to stop the government of Venezuela from moving to the left and taking more radical and revolutionary measures that strengthen Venezuela's independence, sovereignty and influence in the region.

## 20 Years of Revolution ✖ 20 Years of Imperialist Attack

Since the election of Comandante Hugo Chávez in 1998, Venezuela has pursued a path that is independent of the interests and policies of the U.S. government and their allies in Latin America. Inspired by the nearly 60 years of the Cuban revolution,

the revolutionary government of Venezuela has taken a stand for their sovereignty and self-determination, and this has encouraged movements and governments across the region to do the same.

This strengthening of the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement across Latin America has created huge fear and anxiety among imperialist governments. This is why for the last 20 years, the governments of the U.S., Canada and Europe and their right-wing allies in Latin America have battered Venezuela with attempted coup d'états, economic sabotage, criminal sanctions, violence, and outright violations of the laws, constitution and sovereignty of Venezuela on top of constant threats of military intervention.

One of the most blatant examples of this was the 2002 attempted coup d'état against President Chavez. The coup d'état was a complete failure, and within 48 hours President Chavez was returned to office by massive protests and organization of the people of Venezuela. The U.S. government was the biggest loser in the illegal and violent attack as their role in supporting the coup plotters was completely exposed.

Since 2002, U.S. intervention in Venezuela and support for Venezuela's counter-revolutionary, violent opposition has continued to escalate. This opposition has repeatedly initiated violent street riots in Venezuela that have killed hundreds of people. Most of the financial support for the opposition, has been funnelled through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the National Republican Institute (NRI), which puts money directly in the hands of these pro-U.S. mercenaries under the guise of supporting the promotion of "democracy" and "human rights" in Venezuela. The U.S. government has directed hundreds of millions of dollars to this effort, including at least \$25million from 2001-2006 (New York Times) and at least \$49million since 2009 (TeleSUR).

The Organization of American States (OAS) has also been used by the U.S. government as a tool for intervention in Venezuela. For more than three years, the U.S. government and their allies have been maneuvering to suspend or remove Venezuela from the regional body, which by the way, is based in Washington DC. However, on June 5, 2018, the pro-U.S. intervention countries, which includes Canada, lost yet another vote. Out of the 34 member-states, only 15 voted in favour of removing Venezuela for so-called violation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. This type of measure requires 24 votes in favour. This shameful attempt to meddle in the internal affairs of Venezuela is even more disgraceful considering that the Secretary-General of the OAS, Luis Almagro, has continued to attempt to remove Venezuela

from the organization, even though Venezuela began proceedings to leave the OAS by their own accord, and will be gone by April 2019.

### Sanctions are an Act of War

In 2015, U.S. President Obama issued an Executive Order declaring Venezuela an "extraordinary threat" to U.S. national security. This ridiculous assertion, which was renewed by President Trump, has enabled the U.S. government to implement a criminal regime of sanctions against Venezuela. These sanctions and amount to an illegal act of war by implementing collective punishment on the people of Venezuela for expressing their right to choose their government and shape their society.

The criminal sanctions against Venezuela, levelled by the United States, Canada, the European Union, Switzerland and Panama, have had a devastating impact on the Venezuelan economy and the people of Venezuela. They prevent Venezuela's ability to import vital foods and medicine, while at the same time cutting Venezuela off from receiving payments for their exports, cutting them off from financing and limiting their access to foreign currency.

In March 2018 Sures, a Venezuelan civil society, the non-governmental organization issued a report titled "Unilateral Coercive Measures Against Venezuela and Its Impact on Human Rights." This important report documents the damaging effect that sanctions have had on the people of Venezuela. They especially report on the impact on the health of the people of Venezuela including cases where the government of Venezuela has been blocked from paying for life-sustaining imported medicines such as 300,000 doses of insulin.

As reported by Sures, "Venezuela imports most of the medicines it requires to guarantee the life and health of its inhabitants. 34% is purchased from the USA, 7% from Spain and 5% from Italy. Only of these countries that have applied unilateral coercive measures to Venezuela were imported a total of 46% of the medicines needed by the Venezuelan people. The same thing happens with food, 33% of imports come from the USA and 12% from Canada. That is, 45% of food imports originated from states that have maintained a policy of greater confrontation and have applied the greatest amount of economic sanctions against Venezuela."

This report also outlines how the sanctions also target Venezuela's oil sector, and the



Rally in Venezuela in Support of the Bolivarian revolution.

Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA), the main state company having the monopoly of hydrocarbon exploitation on the nation that generates more than the 90% of the income in foreign currency in the country."

The effects of these sanctions have been further exasperated by the economic war that Venezuela's capitalist class is waging against the mass majority of the people of Venezuela. This further attempt to "starve the people of Venezuela into submission" has been manifested in hoarding, a slow-down in the production of basic goods and food in Venezuela as well as the growth of massive smuggling operations that bring super-profits

continued on page 24

## Battle of Ideas Press

### Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela



In the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution in Venezuela which side are you on?

Alison Bodine

By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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# HANDS OFF VENEZUELA

## Vancouver Activists Strongly Oppose Sanctions on Venezuela by the U.S. & Canada

By Janine Solanki

On May 20, 2018, Nicolas Maduro was re-elected as the President of Venezuela with a clear majority of 68%. This free and fair election was a clear victory for the people of Venezuela in defence of their sovereignty - which has been under increasing attack from foreign governments. Even before President Maduro's victory was announced, the governments of the U.S. and Canada, as well as their allies, decried the results as "illegitimate" and "anti-democratic." The Canadian government even took the provocative and anti-democratic move to deny the 6,000 Venezuelan citizens living in Canada their right to vote!

Fire This Time was invited to participant in the International Observers Delegation to the Venezuelan Election. From May 18-22, three FTT representatives were able to see firsthand how the Venezuelan people were engaged in their democratic process. (For more, including video reports, photos and interviews direct from Venezuela visit the website "Venezuela: This is What Democracy Looks Like" at <https://firethistime-venezuela2018.tumblr.com> or check the special section in FTT Volume 12 Issue 6.)

On June 7, the Hugo Chavez People's Defense Front - Southwest chapter organized a report back from the Venezuelan Election. The event, which took place at the Chilean Housing Cooperative in Vancouver, gave an opportunity for participants to hear from delegates to the International Observers Delegation, including representatives from Fire This Time.

On June 8, the next day, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign held the monthly action demanding "U.S./Canada Hands off Venezuela! The action started in front of the U.S. Consulate with a picket, where protesters heard from speakers in

between rounds of marching and chanting "U.S. Hands off Venezuela!" The group then moved up to the busy downtown plaza in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery, where an information table accompanied by a large Venezuelan flag attracted many people passing by. Activists also approached people walking by, collecting signatures on a petition demanding that Canada end its sanctions and threats against Venezuela.

On June 21, the Hugo Chavez People's Defense Front organized a rally in downtown Vancouver in defence of Venezuela's Bolivarian Revolution. Fire This Time endorsed and participated in the rally.

Fire This Time delegates to the Venezuelan elections had a chance to give a comprehensive report back from their experiences on June 21, at the Fire This Time event "This is What Democracy Looks Like! Venezuela Election Report Back". Alison Bodine, Thomas Davies and Michael Larson dispelled the myths and outright lies being told in mainstream Western media about the elections, with their anecdotes and firsthand accounts that showed how Venezuela's elections were fair, transparent, and carried out calmly and peacefully.

With details of how voting is carried out in Venezuela's unique, cross-referenced paper/electronic system, and stories of conversations with Venezuelans lined up to vote, those in attendance came away with a deeper understanding of Venezuela's democracy in motion! Following the delegate's accounts, photos and videos, participants had the opportunity to ask more questions during a discussion period.

To find out about Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign events visit [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT\_np

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

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to criminals and Venezuela's rich.

### Defend the Sovereignty and Self-Determination of Venezuela!

In the last week of June, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence toured throughout Latin America. He explained clearly his intentions with the tour during his speech to the Organization of American States (OAS) in the beginning of June, "I call on member states to apply additional pressure on the Maduro regime with financial sanctions and diplomatic isolation until such time as it takes the actions

necessary to return genuine democracy and provide people desperately needed access to international humanitarian aid."

Let us not be fooled by the deceptions of the U.S. government and their allies, when they speak the language of "human rights" and "democracy." Imperialist governments are following the same recipe for U.S.-sponsored "regime change" that they did in 2006, "Strengthening Democratic Institutions, Penetrating Chavez' Political Base, Dividing Chavismo, Protecting Vital US business, and Isolating Chavez internationally" (from a 2006 diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks).

The U.S.-led campaign to tighten the screws against the Venezuelan economy, overthrow the government of Venezuela, and reverse the gains of the Bolivarian revolutionary process is intensifying. As poor and working people in North America, we must organize to put an end to the criminal sanctions of the United States and Canada against Venezuela. We have the responsibility to defend Venezuela's right to sovereignty and self-determination. We must actively and consistently mobilize in opposition to the U.S. and foreign intervention in Venezuela.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette



Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign monthly action at the U.S. consulate in Vancouver, June 8, 2018.



Fire This Time Venezuela election reportback event, June 21, 2018.



Alison and Mike speak at the Hugo Chavez People's Defense Front after the Venezuelan Election, June 7, 2018.

# VANCOUVER CUBA SOLIDARITY HEATS UP FOR SUMMER

By Janine Solanki

In Canadian mainstream media, the picture painted of Cuba and life for the Cuban people is largely a negative one. That picture is far from the truth! Despite the hardships imposed on Cuba by the U.S. blockade, the Cuban people enjoy a renowned universal healthcare



**Salsa Lesson at Celebration of Che Guevara's Birthday & Brigade Reportback**  
June 24, 2018

and education system. Cubans live in a dynamic and inclusive political system that the Cuban people take a direct role in, from their fair and representative elections to participation in social organizations. The truth is that Cuba is an example which anyone interested in building a better world should look to!

One of VCSC's central campaigns is against the over 55 years long U.S. blockade of Cuba, which continues to put enormous strain on the Cuban economy and limits the availability of many import goods which Cubans need. Despite the historic announcement on December 17, 2014, by former U.S. President Barack Obama and former Cuban President Raul Castro that talks were starting for the normalization of U.S./Cuba relations, the U.S. government never lifted the blockade on Cuba. VCSC had the opportunity to discuss the U.S. blockade with hundreds of people at the annual Main Street Car Free Festival in Vancouver on June 17.



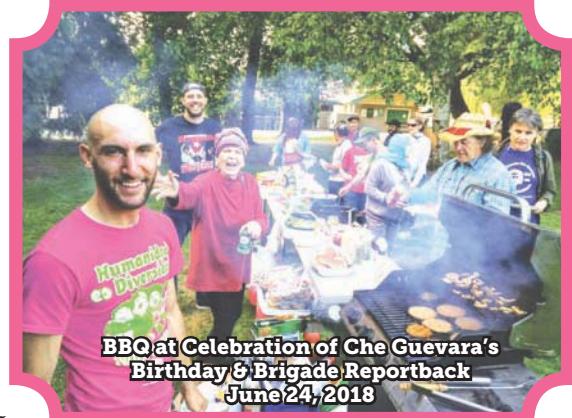
**VCSC Tabling at East Side Pride Festival.**  
June 24, 2018

The 21-block street festival draws over a hundred thousand people, many of which were attracted to the VCSC booth by the Cuban flags and banners, and by the colourful sidewalk chalk on the busy street reading "Hey Trump! Lift the Blockade on Cuba!"

Another truth that VCSC is talking about is LGBTQ rights in Cuba. As a Community Partner in Vancouver Pride, every year VCSC participates in marches, tabling fairs and parades during the Pride season, breaking down the false notion that Cuba is a dangerous place to be gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans or queer. In fact, a widespread and effective campaign against homophobia and transphobia has been in full effect for years in Cuba, with the support of the Cuban revolutionary government. Huge strides have been made in Cuba such as the right to adoption for same-sex couples, and free and accessible gender reassignment surgery. On June 23, VCSC participated in the annual East Side Pride event in Vancouver, with a table of information and a banner proclaiming "Cuba Says: LGBT+ Rights are Human Rights".

Also on June 23, VCSC organized an event celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of revolutionary hero Che Guevara. The event took advantage of the sunny summer weather and was held in Vancouver's Trout Lake Park, complete

with BBQ and potluck for everyone to enjoy! The event started out with a welcoming by Coast Salish Indigenous elder and activist Kelly White, whose strong voice and drumming led the crowd in song. After the welcoming, VCSC coordinator Tamara Hansen spoke about who Che Guevara was, as a leader in the Cuban revolution and an inspiration to people fighting for justice and a better future all around the world. The event was also an opportunity for brigadistas from the 26<sup>th</sup> annual Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade to report back



**BBQ at Celebration of Che Guevara's Birthday & Brigade Reportback**  
June 24, 2018

from their recent trip to Cuba. Brigadistas Catherine and Janine shared stories from the trip, followed by Max who read poetry inspired by Cuba, and a voice message shared by Andrew, a brigadista living in Edmonton. The crowd was also treated to music from another brigadista, Andrew, who played on the guitar and sang for everyone to enjoy. Another musical act followed, with a singing debut by Nadia, a young Cuba solidarity supporter! Kids at the event had their fun demolishing a candy-filled piñata, while participants got up from their picnic tables and blankets to take part in a salsa lesson.

With great summer weather ahead, VCSC will be out around Vancouver holding more events and participating in the upcoming street festivals and Pride events. To join in check for upcoming events at [www.vancubasolidarity.com](http://www.vancubasolidarity.com), follow on Facebook or Twitter

@VanCuba\_VCSC

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki

# Canada Separates Children and Youth Too!

By Tamara Hansen

It seemed like one day I woke up and every news channel, newspaper, and radio station was zeroed in on the appalling situation in the United States with migrant children being imprisoned in cages and separated from their parents. There was a strong and visceral reaction from people around the world against this cruel and inhuman treatment of children and infants. Especially when the Trump administration started justifying their gross policies, as if arriving in the United States in a manner deemed illegal, means you lose all your human rights.

To get a full picture of the government of Canada's lack of humanity when it comes to children and youth, one need look no further than its treatment of the Indigenous peoples of these lands.

An important current example is the "Justice for Our Stolen Children" camp in Saskatchewan. Have you heard of it? Surprisingly few outside of the province have. While some mainstream media have been following the camp, it has not become an issue in Canada, the way that Trump's anti-migrant policies have. I am writing this article just before Canada's

151<sup>st</sup> birthday, to remind us of the importance of not only being consistently outraged by Trump but also to understand and take action against what is happening in Canada.

## Justice for Our Stolen Children camp

A protest camp sprung up on the legislature building lawns in Saskatchewan in February 2018, called the "Justice for our Stolen Children" camp. It was organized in response to the "not guilty" verdicts against those accused of killing two Indigenous youth, Colten Boushie (Cree) and Tina Fontaine (Anishinaabe). These "not guilty" verdicts against two non-Indigenous perpetrators were a gross miscarriage of justice. At the same time, these "not guilty" verdicts did not come as a surprise to many Indigenous people who see that time, and time again Canada's justice system is not designed to provide justice for their communities.



Top: Sign at the "Justice for Our Stolen Children" Camp marks 98 days of protest. Bottom Left: Soolee Papequash, 56, and her 17-year-old granddaughter La'hooya Sparvier, at the camp in Regina. Bottom Right: On June 18, 6 activists were arrested for "obstruction" as the police took down the camp.

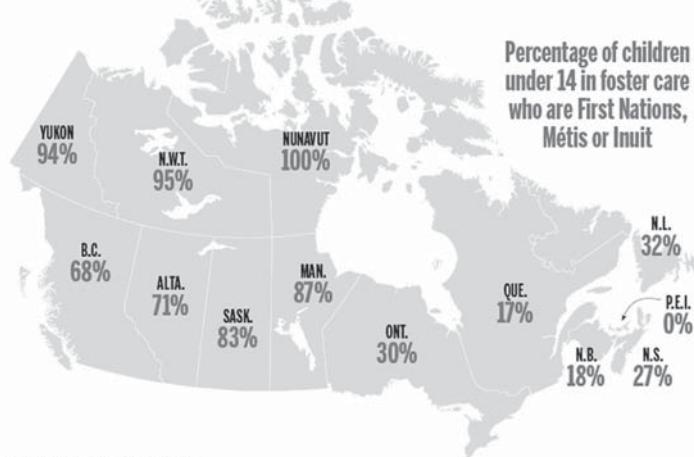
services, the justice system and violence." Many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people have come together to tend the sacred fire at the camp. Many Indigenous people interviewed at the camp have lost their children under suspicious circumstances that they feel were not properly investigated by authorities.

On June 18, while the camp had been in place for 111 days, police raided the camp and arrested several activists. One of the main reasons for attacking the camp? Clearing the way for upcoming "Canada Day Celebrations". Nevertheless, activists would not surrender, and the camp was set up again only a short while later. They prepared and then held what they dubbed a "pre-Canada" celebration. Artists, musicians and community members celebrated the legacy of Indigenous peoples before the establishment of the Canadian state.

Only days before Canada Day Saskatchewan Premier Scott Moe spoke with reporters, urging the police to bring down the camp once again. He said, "It isn't lost on me that we are, in the southern part of the province here on Treaty 4 territory. But it also isn't lost on me that we have laws here in the park so that it is available for everyone's enjoyment. [...]

## Caught in the system

Indigenous families make up 8 per cent of Canada's population, but First Nations, Métis and Inuit children are disproportionately more likely to be in foster care



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA 2016 CENSUS; MACLEAN'S

would encourage all to ensure we are in that park on Canada Day." Of course, Mr. Moe did not address the fact that the park around the legislature is huge, with an abundance of space for multiple activities on the grounds. He also speaks as if activists and Indigenous people are not included in "everyone."

A meeting between government representatives and the "Justice for our Stolen Children" camp has been organized for July 2, it is because of this planned meeting that Mr. Moe believes activists should wrap up their camp, but why is a Canada Day celebration more important to him than Indigenous youth and their families?

As Soolee Papequash of the Piapot First Nation told the CBC, she got involved in the camp because of her son Brandon. He seemingly died of an accidental overdose almost three years ago, but Papequash told the CBC many things don't add up. She has been at the camp seeking justice, but also because it has built a sense of caring and community. That said, the camp has also faced racist attacks, the CBC reports, "[Papequash] remembered how a passerby yelled in the direction of the camp: "go home and look after your children." "I would [redacted] but he's dead. I can't go home and look after him," she said."

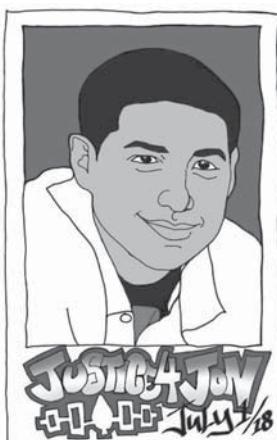
The thoughts she shared to CBC about the camp being dismantled were, "I don't want to be traded in for a beer garden. [...] I want answers."

#### Indigenous Youth in Care: a system in crisis or a system designed to fail?

In a Toronto Star article titled, "Separating children from their parents, the Canadian way," journalist Gillian Steward connects the injustice happening in the U.S. against migrant families to Canada's treatment of Indigenous peoples. Steward writes, "in 2016 a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled the Canadian government was discriminating against Indigenous children because on-reserve communities are not afforded the same level of resources for their families as other communities. As a consequence, more Indigenous children are likely to end up separated from their families in foster care, group homes, or detention facilities than non-Indigenous children. In Manitoba, for example, 10,000 of the 11,000 children in care are Indigenous. In Alberta about 70 percent of children in foster care are Indigenous."

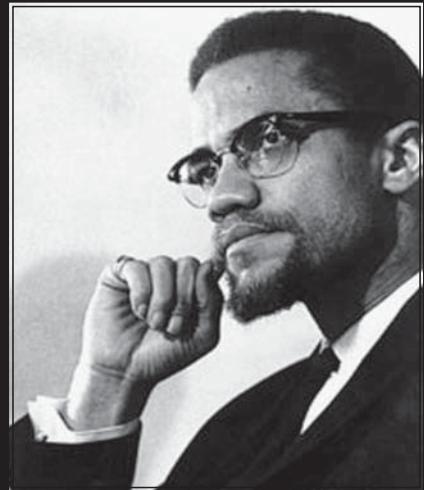
In fact, there are over 165,000 Indigenous youth and children who have been affected by the government's discrimination. The person who helped to expose this injustice was Cindy Blackstock, a Gitxsan professor and the President of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. She took the previous Conservative government of Canada to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, fighting for over ten years to bring attention to the government's unequal funding for on and off reserve child welfare services. Over two years ago, she won her case. Unfortunately, the Trudeau Liberal government has yet to budget the money necessary to rectify this ongoing inequality. This amounts to discrimination by the government against 165,000 children based solely on their race.

According to a Chatelaine Magazine article, "The Stunning Number of First Nations Kids in Foster Care [redacted] And the Activists Fighting Back" the full statistics are even more revealing. They explain, "in 2016, First Nations, Metis and Inuit youth made up 52 percent of foster children younger than 14 in Canada, despite representing just



The "Justice for Our Stolen Children" Camp rallies with groups across Canada to demand: "Justice for Colten Boushie!" "Justice for Tina Fontaine!" & most recently "Justice for Jon Styres!"

## "By Any Means Necessary..."



### MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Sitting at the table doesn't make you a diner, unless you eat some of what's on that plate. Being here in America doesn't make you an American. Being born here in America doesn't make you an American. Why, if birth made you American, you wouldn't need any legislation; you wouldn't need any amendments to the Constitution...

No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver -- no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare."

- The Ballot or the Bullet.  
April 3, 1964

eight percent of that age group, according to Statistics Canada. That's four points higher than in 2011, reflecting the fact that more Indigenous children have been entering foster care than leaving it. [...] These national statistics, however, only account for children living in private households. If they included those who live in group homes, shelters or mental health facilities, say advocates, the total would be far higher."

Some have begun to call our current period "the Millennial scoop," which connects what is happening today to what happened in the 1960s during a period known as the "60s scoop", which I will further explain. Using the term "Millennial scoop," also forces us to think of this current era as a system designed to divide and fail Indigenous communities, rather than just a system that is full of well-intentioned mistakes.

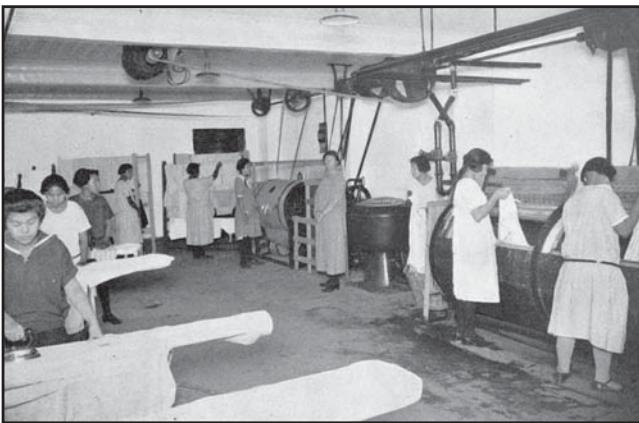
### Indigenous youth throughout the history of Canada

As many in Canada are celebrating the country's 151<sup>st</sup> birthday, it is worth reflecting on what the government of Canada has done to Indigenous youth since its very inception.

The government of the Dominion of Canada lead by Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald began instituting its policy of separating Indigenous children and youth from their families in the 1880s, through its Indian Residential School system. In 1920, under the *Indian Act* (Canada's legal policy towards Indigenous people, which has been modified numerous times since 1867, but remains the problematic and racist law of Canada today), every Indigenous child in Canada was forced to attend a residential school. This resulted in thousands of Indigenous children being ripped away from their parents and communities by the government of Canada. The final residential school to close was the Gordon Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1996.

According to CBC news, 1931 is considered the peak of the residential school system, when about 80 schools were open across Canada. From the 1880s to 1996, there were a total of 130 residential schools throughout Canada. CBC reports, "In all, about 150,000 First Nation, Inuit and Métis children were

**Top: Rally demanding compensation for survivors of the 60s scoop. Bottom: Indigenous girls doing the laundry at Coqualeetza residential school in British Columbia**



removed from their communities and forced to attend the schools."

Children and youth were placed in residential schools, run jointly by the government and various denominations of the Christian church. The stated goal of these schools was "to kill the Indian in the child," in other words these schools were designed to perpetrate genocide against Indigenous nations.

In 1951, the government of Canada made changes to the *Indian Act* which allowed for the eventual closure of the residential schools. However, it was a four-decade-long process. In 1955, according to the Canadian Encyclopedia, "The federal government expanded the system of residential schools and hostels to Inuit in the far north." Additionally, while the schools were closing in some areas, the government came up with new ways to push their racist assimilation agenda. Throughout the 1960s, was the period I mentioned before of the "60s scoop" when Indigenous children were taken from their families by government social workers and placed in mostly non-Indigenous foster or adoption homes.

### Fighting for a Better Future

jaye simpson, a 23-year-old university

student, poet and artist lived through the foster system. Explaining to the CBC, "The foster care system is working the way it's designed: as a machine to destroy Indigeneity." While I am sure many people in Canada could debate this topic for hours, the historical and present situation in Canada for Indigenous children and youth demonstrates that these issues are never accidental, they are always by design.

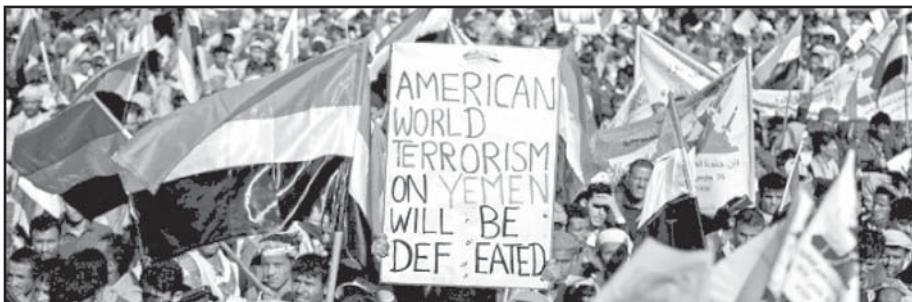
Unfortunately, the government of Canada has a vested interest in destroying Indigenous nations and Indigenous identities, because capitalist development in this country is built on stolen land and broken treaties. For Canada to honour its promises it must first implement the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples. However, these are just the bare minimum standard for equality, equity, and respect of fundamental

rights they are not even revolutionary demands. However, implementing this basic standard will cost the capitalist government billions of dollars as well as much of its economic and political power, which they are not willing to give up. It is also important to keep in mind, that while billions of dollars sounds like a lot, what has been stolen from Indigenous nations over the past 151 years (and four hundred years before that) is worth infinitely more.

From residential schools to the 60s scoop, to the present-day Millennial scoop, the youth suicide epidemic and skyrocketing youth incarceration rates Canada 151<sup>st</sup> birthday marks 151 years of attempting to eradicate Indigenous nations, through targeting their most vulnerable, Indigenous children and youth. Despite this ongoing attack, Indigenous nations are fighting back; we see this in the "Justice for Our Stolen Children" camp and many other examples. As human-loving people, we have a responsibility to become stronger allies to Indigenous people who are on the front lines fighting for a better future for their children and youth, which will inherently mean a better future for all working and oppressed people in Canada.

Follow Tamara on Twitter:@THans01

# HANDS OFF YEMEN!



## Excerpt from the United National Antiwar Coalition Statement Against the US/Saudi Arabian War on Yemen

In recent weeks we have seen a huge escalation of the war against Yemen being waged by a coalition of forces that includes the United States, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, the UK and France. These forces have waged a relentless war against Yemen, the poorest Arab country. There has been continuous bombing of the country by Saudi Arabia, including hospitals, schools, food supplies, neighborhoods, infrastructure and other civilian targets. More than 14,600 civilians have been killed and injured and over three million people have been internally displaced. The devastation has been so bad that the country is now entirely dependent on outside aid as eight million Yemenis face famine. The worst cholera epidemic ever has caused over 1 million cases and resulted in more than 2,200 deaths.

Even before the war began, this impoverished country imported 90% of its food. The port of Hodeidah has been the primary entry point for food and other aid and is now the target of a new offensive by the US/Saudi/UAE coalition threatening mass starvation to get the Yemeni people to submit to their will. The recent attack on Hodeidah has included massive Saudi bombing of the port and a ground force that includes officers from the UAE leading anti-Ansar Allah Yemenis along with mercenaries, many from Sudan. This attempt to close the port of Hodeidah should be seen as a war crime. This is a genocidal war that could not continue one day without US support.

The corporate media claims that there is a civil war in Yemen between "Houthi rebels" and the "legitimate government" of Yemen, but this lie is criminal in light of the suffering of the Yemeni people. In 2012 the indigenous Ansar Allah movement, which includes the Houthis, and other contending forces in the country came to an

agreement for Abed Rabbo Mansur Hadi to be elected president for a two-year term. In 2014, after breaking the agreement and losing all support, he fled to Saudi Arabia and the Ansar Allah movement came to power as hundreds of thousands marched in the streets in their support.

In 2015, Saudi Arabia started its bombing of Yemen to try and reinstate Hadi into power and crush a popular movement. Their invasion was supported by some other Arab countries and the US. It was the Obama administration that first gave the green light to Saudi Arabia, and the Trump administration has continued the policy. Without US military and diplomatic backing, the war on Yemen could not take place. It rightfully should be called the US/Saudi Arabian war on Yemen.

Many in the US have been horrified by the arrests and separation of families at the US border. This has laid bare the inhumanity of the US government and has caused deserved outrage from the people of the US and the world. As on the US border, children are the major victims of imperialist wars and induced-poverty. The outrage and revulsion caused by the children's plight in the US forced some backtracking by the US government. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen demands the same outpouring of compassion, anger, and action by the US media and people and the international community for the suffering children and civilians in Yemen as well. We can and must stop this horror.

### We demand:

**End to US support for the war on Yemen and end to the fighting!**  
**End the blockade and provide humanitarian aid to Yemen!**  
**End all military aid to Saudi Arabia!**

*From: unapeace.org*

## OUR HERITAGE



### Clara Zetkin

Born on July 5, 1857 - 161 years ago this month. Clara Zetkin was a German Marxist theorist, activist and organizer of the first International Women's Day in 1911.

*The following is an excerpt from, "The Duty of Working Women in War-Time" which was published November 19, 1914 as she organized against the First World War from within Germany.*

"We Socialist women hear the voices which in this time of blood and iron still speak softly, painfully, and yet consolingly, of the future. Let us be their interpreters to our children. Let us preserve them from the harsh brazen sound of the ideas which fill the streets to-day, in which cheap pride-of-race stifles humanity. In our children must grow up the security that this most frightful of all wars shall be the last. The blood of the killed and wounded must not be a stream to divide that which unites the present distress and the future hope. It must be as a cement which shall bind fast for all time."

# REPEAL BILL C-51 SCRAP BILL C-59!

## FIGHTING BACK AGAINST UNDEMOCRATIC LAWS

*By Thomas Davies & Max Tennant*

June was a month of security scandals in Canada. First off, a judge forced Canada's spy agency, CSIS, to destroy a massive amount of illegal information it was storing for decades. Meanwhile, Freedom of Information requests also brought to light an unknown US-Canada border watch list that Prime Minister Trudeau has been secretly trying to enlarge with the Trump administration.

The "National Security" Bill, which was promised by the Liberals as a fix to the massively controversial Bill C-51, has turned out to be nothing of the sort. While it would remove some of Bill C-51's most drastic and vague "anti-terrorist" language, the Liberals are advancing the most broad and alarming data collection regime in the history of Canada.

### Cannot Be Trusted

At the same time as Trudeau is trying to give CSIS more power for "Big Data" collection of

our personal information without justification, the spy service is being forced by a judge to destroy undisclosed volumes of records relating to the communications of thousands across Canada. Starting in 2006, intelligence analysts had saved data into their systems about people who were initially seen to be in proximity to terrorism targets, but who ended up not themselves being considered threats. This information was kept regardless that CSIS knew full well it had nothing to do with suspects of terrorism.

Meanwhile, the Liberal government is working behind closed doors with the Trump administration on a new version of the program known as Tuscan, short for Tipoff U.S./Canada. The Guardian newspaper reported that Canada uses Tuscan, a vast repository of at least 680,000 names 40% of which have "no recognized terrorist group affiliation" to screen all travellers coming into Canada from anywhere in the world.

The program began in 1997, and this information is only coming to light now because of the Guardian's Freedom of Information Requests. Tuscan's list is kept by U.S. authorities, and offers no clear process to remove your name if you think you have been added in error.

The Guardian interviewed Josh Patterson, Executive Director of the BC Civil Liberties Association, who pointed out that Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale embarked on a public consultation on national security, promising transparency



and a review of the official no-fly list even while staying silent about Tuscan, which has been functioning all along as a second, unofficial no-fly list.

### Defending Our Rights

As long as Bill C-59 has not been passed into law, there is an opportunity to stop it. Given that, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 has continued to organize full out during the summer months and continued its campaign of weekly actions. Now up to 173 consecutive weeks, the Working Group alternated between banner drops and petition drives to hit four different cities in June: Burnaby, New Westminster, Coquitlam and Richmond.

The work of defending human rights and privacy must continue. The government and its so called "security" institutions have shown themselves to be completely untrustworthy, and when left to their own devices, completely destructive. We must continue to educate, organize and mobilize to Repeal Bill C-51 and Scrap Bill C-59. Our rights are too important to be left unprotected.

**Repeal Bill C-51! Scrap Bill C-59!**

# HEY TRUMP! LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!

*By Janine Solanki*

On December 17, 2014, former U.S. President Barack Obama and former Cuban President Raul Castro made the historic announcement that talks would begin to normalize U.S./Cuba relations. Cuba solidarity activists here in Vancouver knew that it was more crucial than ever to put pressure on the U.S. government to end the blockade on Cuba, and Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade (FCAB-Vancouver) was formed. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of every month FCAB-Vancouver holds a picket action in front of the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver, and in the last three years of these actions, more cities have joined in coordinated action! Now Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine are holding monthly protests and encouraging more cities to join this campaign. The importance of keeping up the pressure is clear as the U.S. government still hasn't lifted the blockade of Cuba, and

U.S. President Donald Trump has tried to turn back some of the progresses.

On June 17, Vancouver, Ottawa, Montreal and Kiev took to the streets in solidarity with Cuba. In Vancouver, protesters held up picket signs and banners in front of the U.S. Consulate demanding "Lift the Blockade on Cuba!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba now!" In between rounds of picketing, protesters gathered together to hear from local speakers as well as a voice message of solidarity from Ottawa Cuba Connections, which was picketing in front of the U.S. Embassy. As is now tradition, at the end of the action a group photo was taken under the U.S. Consulate sign with Cuban flags, banners and picket signs held proudly, and shared online for people around the world to see.

Friends of Cuba around the world

have an important role in uniting with the Cuban people and standing up against continued U.S. attacks on Cuba. To find out about the next action in Vancouver visit [www.vancubavsblockade.org](http://www.vancubavsblockade.org) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

**On June 17, 2018 groups around the world mobilized against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, below is a picture from the FCAB- Vancouver action**



# VANCOUVER ANTIWAR ACTIVISTS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO DEMAND: "NO TO WAR AND OCCUPATION, YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION!"

By Janine Solanki

Today in the United States, the crucial human needs of people are being denied funding and attention, such as healthcare, affordable education, and housing. Comparatively, this year the U.S. military was given a record \$700 billion budget. Already before this huge influx of funds, the U.S. has led a new era of war and occupation which began with the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan in 2001 and has continued with the wars and occupations against Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Palestine. In addition to outright military interventions, the U.S. has threatened and sanctioned Iran, North Korea and Venezuela.

Alongside the U.S., the government of Canada also has bloody hands in these imperialist wars and occupations. After the U.S., Saudi Arabia is the second highest buyer of military supplies from Canada. Since 2015, Canada has also approved more than \$284 million in exports of Canadian weapons and military goods to the countries bombing Yemen, most of which has gone to Saudi Arabia. This is in addition to Canada's \$15 billion arms deal to supply Saudi Arabia with so-called "light" armoured military vehicles. With the backing of Canada and the U.S., Saudi Arabia has been at war with the people of Yemen for the past three years and destroyed the country with an indiscriminate bombing campaign and a crippling air, sea and land blockade that has prevented aid from reaching what the United Nations calls "the worst man-made humanitarian crisis of our time."

Here in Vancouver, Canada, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) is out on the streets in protest every month, demanding an end to the new era of war and occupation and calling

attention to Canada's role as an imperialist country. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, antiwar activists and peace-loving people came together in downtown Vancouver and made an impression on anyone walking by with an information table, picket signs and large banners reading "Don't Attack Syria! U.S. Out of Syria and the Middle East!" "U.S./Saudi Arabia Hands Off Yemen!" and "Self-Determination for Palestine!" People walking by stopped at the info table to talk with activists and collect antiwar literature, and to learn more about MAWO's ongoing antiwar events and actions. Teams of activists took to the busy downtown street and collected signatures from passers-by on a petition demanding that Canada end its \$15 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

To wrap up the action, protesters gathered together and Alison Bodine, MAWO's chair, gave a speech outlining the new era of war and occupation and the current situation of the brutal U.S. backed, Saudi-led war on Yemen. MAWO is committed to continuing monthly antiwar rallies and petition campaigns, as well as public forums and other educational antiwar events and protest actions. To find out about MAWO's upcoming actions visit [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @MAWOVan



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